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The Messenger of Napoleon

R. N. MOFFAT

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THE MESSENGER OF NAPOLEON

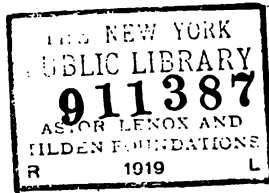
A Dramatic Historical Story

By the Author of
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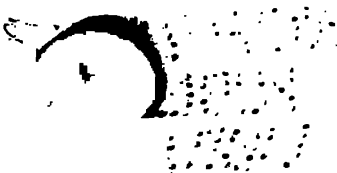
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R. N. MOFFAT

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**THE MESSENGER OF
NAPOLEON**



The Messenger of Napoleon.

CHAPTER I.

It had been raining hard for hours, and we were weary. How could we be otherwise? We had marched steadily along, grumbling, sometimes cursing the fate that forced us to be out in such weather. We wondered why our Regiment had been selected for a piece of business so little to our liking, for ours was a fighting regiment. Not one of the kind that craves My Ladies parlor and the dance, but yesterday, we had started on a march of fifty miles or more, to Garrison a town in the northern part of France. This meant nothing for us to do, (as the troops of the enemy were far away,) and afforded great opportunities for our men to get into trouble, such as drinking, gambling, and making love, all of which I despise in a manner becoming an Officer and a Soldier.

It was nearly six years now, since I joined the army of France, and I am certain that my promotion was due entirely to the fact that I did not drink strong liquors, and was afraid, even to the verge of nervousness, if by any chance I was left in the company of women, and here we were, about to go into winter quarters where many of them lived, I regretted this, but a soldier is a man who is


not afraid to obey orders, even in the lines of the enemy and I have little patience with any man who fails to obey orders, even, almost where—but I have no love for women. Not I.

My attention was attracted by an orderly who approached at a gallop. As we exchanged salutes, he said, "Sir, the commanding officer desires that you report to him." What now I wondered, as I motioned for Jean to take command, and rode to the head of the line. Little did I think of the trick the fates were about to play on me, so I tried to be as cheerful as a man could be who was wet to the skin, and almost numbed by cold.

"Captain," said our Colonel, "You will take a guard, and ride in advance to the village, select the best available camp for the troops near the quarters you select for the Officers, make all needed arrangements for camp supplies, you know what is necessary.

Saluting, I dropped behind, and in less than five minutes, I selected my guard, and had left the regiment in the rear. I will never forget that day, or rather night, for it was almost dark now, and what little light yet remained, was effectually hidden from our sight by the density of the rain, that drove into our faces with such fury whenever we ventured to raise our heads, long enough to take our bearings and gain some idea of the direction we were travelling. The roads were in such bad condition that it was impossible to hurry, and I felt sure that by this time our regiment had camped for the night. but still I hurried on, and at last was rewarded by a faint gleam of a lamp, sitting in the window of some dwelling house on the outskirts of the town.

I did not attempt to hold conversation with my companions, but a common impulse drew us toward the light. We had entered the yard, and were riding toward the door, when I felt something tighten under my chin, and before I could disengage myself I was pulled backwards off my horse. I had a habit of fastening my lines to the



buttons of my coat, and in this instance the habit proved my undoing, for my horse, trained to obey the slightest touch of the bridal, reared upward, and fell back upon me, crushing me to the earth, and bereaving me of all sense or feeling.

Gradually at first, I began to make note of my surroundings, I could smell the odor of some perfume, such as ladies sometimes besmear themselves with, an odor most offensive to me. Then, I discovered that I was laying on a clean feather bed, instead of my own cot in camp, or even a cot in the hospital tent. And as I painfully moved, the better to view my surroundings, I became aware that I was in a large and well furnished room, with a big open window on one side, in front of which sat a woman. I looked at her in amaze. Never before had I seen anyone just like her, as she combed a wealth of glossy hair, which hung in clusters around her shoulders. I surmised that she thought I was asleep, as for myself, I was afraid to speak to her, for I had but very little experience with women, and had no dreams of a woman's eyes to haunt me.

I tried to crawl further under the bedding, the better to hide her from my sight, and to prevent her from seeing me, but the pain in my side and leg caused me to be still, so I shut my eyes, the better to hide her from my sight, and soon, fell asleep, dreaming of some ogre, some horrid monster, with masses of shining hair, reaching out a long bony hand, trying to clutch me, then I awoke, greatly relieved to know that it was but a dream.

The first thing I did on awakening, was to look in the direction where the woman was sitting, and was greatly relieved not to see her, but still that perfume clouded my mind, and made me wish that I was in my own quarters, enjoying myself with kindred spirits. I had about made up my mind to make my desires in this re-

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gard known, when the door opened, and a young woman came in, bearing a tray of food. It was daylight now, and I could tell at a glance that it was the same female, who I had already seen. I closed my eyes and pretended to be asleep, but could not continue the deception when she placed her hand upon my forehead, so opening my eyes I greeted her as civilly as possible.

"You are better now," she said, and I wondered at her words, for I had no idea of how much I had been injured, but she continued speaking.

"Be perfectly quiet, and I will feed you this broth." suiting the action to her words. Strange as it may seem, I enjoyed having her place the spoon to my lips, and ate without a murmur all she gave me.

As she arose to leave, I was moved to thank her for the great kindness, for I was a stranger to her. She smiled in return. I had never seen a woman who can smile as she did, and even now, after many years, I will solemnly make oath, that no other can.

"What hour of the day is it?" I inquired, for I knew that even now our troops should be nearing the village.

"It is about nine in the morning," she answered.

"And our troops?"

"Have been here five days, but here comes Doctor Murphy who will tell you all you should know." So with a graceful bow of her head she left the room, just as Dr. Murphy entered.

"Roul, my boy," he began, as soon as he entered, "Sure it's glad to see you looking so well this morning. It was a nasty fall you had, a matter of three ribs, and a broken leg, say nothing at all of the internal injuries you sustained, but a man born to die by a bullet could hardly be killed by such a simple thing as a cloth-line, could he now?" He had taken hold of my wrist as he spoke, and smiled in a way that showed great satisfaction.

"You are due to stay right here for the better part of

another month, and you will be lucky if you get well enough to resume your command in three. O you lucky dog, that you are, and to have the sweetest angel on earth for a nurse. Sure, I would gladly be dashed to pieces for that same privilege."

I tried to speak, but he cut me off.

"Shut up now, or by the ghost of St. Peter, I'll fill you full of quinine, so I will, just be quiet and I'll tell you about it. First when you met with your accident, the young lady who just left the room took charge of you, and sent her brother in a hurry for the local Sawbones, who did all in his power for you, and it was not a great deal he could do either, for the poor man never had any army training, but that is no fault of his own, rather an oversight of his parents. One of your troopers, with rare judgment do you mind, conceived the idea that it would be about as good a joke on me as he ever played, to roust me out in that driving rain, and bring me to your assistance. It was a scurvy trick of him too, and the first time I get a whack at him, I'll pay him for his practical joking.

"You were completely senseless when I reached you, and as I entered the hall you were shouting all kinds of threats at the little man who was doing his best to save you. You even told me; me mind you, your old friend, that if I cut off your head, you would demand a meeting at the earliest opportunity.

Here he laughed joyfully, as if he had just discovered something funny in the situation. Still, I may be pardoned if I did not share his mirth. I confess I found but little to amuse me in his speech, but, he continued to talk, in the same senseless manner.

"Well, by the time I had the patches on you, the Regiment was in camp about half a mile from this very house, but do you mind that now, it will be a few days yet, before I let any of them disturb you and sometime after that, before I let you get up. So just eat and

drink what the little angel brings you, and if you have the good sense, I think you have, and the good luck I wish you, there will be one less woman hater on earth, and mind that now.

With this parting shot he left me, and I had not asked one single question, although a million of them had been surging through my mind. Here I lay helpless, in the private room of a young female. Bitterly did I regret it, but was far beyond helping myself.

When I awoke about the middle of the afternoon, I noticed that the same young woman had resumed her attention to myself. It was then for the first time in my life, that I thought kindly of a female stranger. How tenderly she sponged my face, and combed my hair, as she told me of the things I most cared to hear about. I never thought to meet a woman, who took interest in affairs, such as men care for, but here was one, as well, if not better acquainted with such things as I. From her I heard the latest news of the war, also many things of which I thought her sex knew nothing.

She told me of her brother, who was an officer in the second division (that commanded by Ney), also of her brother's friend, one Peirre St. Armand, who was continually mistaken for the great Napoleon, and declared that the likeness was so complete, that none could detect the difference. However, as St. Armand, always wore a moustache, there was no likelihood of anyone being so mistaken. Indeed she was a remarkable young woman. * * * * *

I had been confined to bed for three weeks, when in response to my entreaties, Murphy helped me to dress, and led me to a seat near the window, where he left me to enjoy myself as I might, first having exacted a promise, that I would not attempt to move unless assisted by some one. The Doctor in addition to being one of the best surgeons in our army, was my bosom friend, many a trial we had together, and it was seldom necessary, ex-

cept when on duty, to look for the Doctor, anywhere else than in my quarters. He was greatly in demand among our troops, although a little severe at times, for it was said of him, that he would cut off a hand any time, just to save the finger. I was deeply grateful to the Doctor, and acting on several suggestive hints from him, I had greatly changed my opinion of women during the last month. As I sat there I began to wonder if they were all alike, or if all the perfect graces of her sex were confined in Marie Montessor, or if they were shared by others, be that as it may, I was thrilled when I heard her say:

"Beautiful day outside, is it not, Captain Le Claire? I will give you a Sou, if you will truly tell me what you were thinking of just now."

I flushed for an instant as I thought, that perchance she had divined my thoughts, then answered bravely as a soldier may.

"My thoughts are worth more than that to me, I was thinking of you."

I will never forget how the rose color spread across her face, but she smiled, and I was happy, for I knew I had not displeased her. O what changes can be wrought by a woman's smile, in one short instant the destiny of life may be changed by it, it may be the one thing lacking to crown a man with perfect bliss, or drive him to despair and death. Perhaps she divined my thoughts, for after a moment she pointed to the troops who were now assembled to be drilled.

See all those brave men, how strong they look, how grand they are, yet they are all here because a woman wished it on them.

I must have looked the doubt I felt, for she continued.

Colonel Le Place displeased the Empress by not appearing at a reception." Now do you understand why your Troop is wintering here?

If that is so I replied, I am indeed fortunate to be one of that troop.

She looked sharply at me for an instant, then abruptly left the room, I wondered if I had offended her. I could hardly be mistaken in that look. For me, the room seemed to grow suddenly dark, although the sun was brightly shining through the window casement. I who had faced the enemy in many battles, I who had as many wounds on my body as I have fingers and toes, never felt a pain so keen, as that which now threatened to unman me. Bitterly I regretted by first attack on the heart of a woman, and mentally upbraided myself because of the thoughtless words, that drove away the woman I had learned to love.

Oh, what maddening thoughts came to my mind as I attempted to arise, and cast myself out of the window, only to be prevented in this, by the firm hand of Dr. Murphy. who had entered the room unknown to me, then taking me in his arms, he carried me over, and laid me on the bed.

"Now be aisy, Roul. Don't take it so hard as that, sure she never meant it, when you have had as much experience as I have, you will know that no true woman despises an honest man's love, even if she is not able to return it."

Something fell on my face as he adjusted the pillow to my head. I was startled, for then, and only then, did I guess of the tender heart in the man, who was able to lift me, even as he would a child. It was a tear, the tear of a strong man in a wealth of friendship for another. Grasping his hand within my own I fell asleep.

How long I slept, I could hardly guess, but they had passed away from the window when consciousness returned to me. I heard the note of bugle, sharp and clear, sounding the call to boots and saddles. What did it mean? I was not left long in doubt, for I heard hurried steps in the hall, and an instant later, Dr. Murphy and one of the men in my own troop entered.

"Roul, my boy, we are going to leave, we have received orders to join Soult's division, and if you are real good, you may be able to join us in a month. In the meantime I must leave you to the tender mercy of Jean here. Now use a little common sense, and do what Jean tells you, and you may be able to join us in a month from now. I have refused to let any of the boys drop in to see you, but there is a fine lot of them, who send their best wishes, so be good, Roul, and we will be glad to welcome you back, when you come. Good bye. Take care of him, Jean," then he left me.

Often have I wondered at the misery of that hour, to a man like myself, who had always been first in every kind of sport, and who enjoyed the company of others, my present condition seemed unbearable; to realize that my Comrades were soon to be in action, I not with them, and worst of all, confined within the same house where I had received the first great disappointment of my life made my existence well nigh unbearable. True there was Jean, the best swordsman I had ever met. He would help me to pass my time, for just as soon as possible, we would resume our exercise. Once again I complimented the doctor for his forethought for Jean was a gentleman, both by birth and education, who had learned how to use all kinds of weapons in foreign service, so my mind flitted from one thing to another, until tired at last, I fell into a sweet refreshing sleep, and dreamed the fairest and sweetest dreams.

CHAPTER II.

I was walking quietly along, singing the tune of an old love song and as I was singing, it may be surmised that I was at peace and in harmony with the rest of the

world. The sun was shining brightly and lent new beauty to the young leaves on the trees, a beauty I had never noticed before, the birds flitted from branch to branch, raised their shrill voices, and sang their notes in harmony with my own. Below me in the valley, I could see the brook, rushing over the stones that seemed to rise here and there, as if to stay the stream in its course toward the river, into which it entered a few miles further on. A herd of cattle were peacefully grazing in the field, while from the yard of some farm house near by, the sharp bark of a faithful watch-dog seemed to warn trespassers of danger there. Away to the right I saw the white tents of our army and watched the short sharp drill given to a company of recruits lately arrived to join our forces. I could see our flags gaily waving in the wind, and over an old fashioned farm house floated the tri-pennant, which proclaimed it headquarters for a chief of division.

How my heart thrilled as I noticed the splendid appearance of our troops, as they marched out to be reviewed. Column after column with that steady precision, which of itself bespeaks the veteran of war. Now a bugle directs my attention to another part of the field where a body of troopers were preparing to mount. I could feel the blood tingling through my veins with a fierceness I had no power to stay, and in a delirium of pride, I waved my hat toward them and shouted, Vive Le Traillieurs, Vive Napoleon.

As if my voice had broken some spell, the shout was echoed from one side of the valley to the other, and thousands of voices responded with the cry, Vive Napoleon. I could see the General as he rode along the line, and the brilliant accoutrements of his staff officers as they rode behind. You, who have never felt the joy of being one in scenes like this, can hardly know the joy I felt, that bright spring morning at Austerlitz.

I noticed a slight confusion and a halt on the part of

the General and his staff officers as they gathered around him, a young man, an officer of engineers, stepped out and saluted, stood at attention for a moment, then slowly handed his sword to a brother officer and was escorted away.

I knew this man was now under arrest, although too far away to hear the cause. For some reason my sympathies were with him, and as I noted the firm tread and fine military air with which he preceded his guard, I resolved to do all in my power to befriend him.

Somehow I seemed to know him, although I was not acquainted among the Engineers, and instinctively I felt that here was a conspiracy, and I was in some manner implicated in the case. The next day passed quickly, and the morning of the trial dawned bright and clear. Everywhere was hurry and confusion, but no one could be found who did not believe the young man guilty of treason, the crime of which he was accused. And well I knew that if convicted, there would be no mercy shown.

I stood at the door of the farm house now used as headquarters as the prisoner was led inside. I noted the paleness of his face and the angry defiance in his eye. Now, for the first time, I resolved to discover his identity, so turning to an officer who was approaching, I enquired:

"Sir, can you favor me with the name of the officer who is about to be court martialled?"

He looked me fairly in the eye, almost insolently before he answered my question. I did not like that look, and made a mental note of the man.

"His name is Albert Montessor. Are you a friend of his?"

Something in his manner told me that this man was the moving cause against Montessor, and a surge of hatred passed over me as I answered:

"Yes, I am his friend, do you dare to question my loyalty to friend or country?"

"Take care that you too are not in trouble," he warned.

I drew myself up proudly as I demanded, "Is that a threat?"

"Make out of it what you will, but keep out of my way." Acting on the impulse, I struck him firmly on the cheek with the flat of my hand. I saw the fire flash in his eye, and for an instant thought he would return the blow, but he only smiled and inquired for the name of my friend. Having written the name of Captain DeMarr in his notebook, he entered the room set aside as a court room. I followed him inside, wondering how I could astist Albert Montressor, and feeling sure that I had made a revengeful enemy.

With a start I awoke to find Marie Montressor bending over me, a look of anxiety on her face.

"You do not sleep well, Captain?" she inquired.

"No," I answered, "I was dreaming."

It was more than a week before I was allowed to sit at the window again, but during that time I regained strength very rapidly, and what was of vastly more importance to me, I was satisfied that Marie Montressor was not entirely indifferent to me. Sometimes when left alone with her, she was the most enchanting being on earth, but I noticed when Jean was with me, that there was a restrained and subdued tenderness about her. That was very gratifying to me. Yes, I was pleased with the many little acts of kindness she was ever doing, although at no time did I try to win her regard, preferring rather to wait until the eve of my departure, then to risk her displeasure, and be forced to live in the same house with her. Strange as it may seem, I roundly berated myself for my former indifference to women, yet fondly told myself, that if I could not win her, I would never wed another.

Oh what beautiful visions seemed to visit me during the next three weeks, for when not busy with Jean at

some light practice or another, I was building castles in the air for myself and Marie. In fancy I could see my boyhood's home at the foot of the hill, the spray of pure and sparkling water, as it dashed from the flume to the old mill wheel, then on again it rushed into the river, on to the Ocean of eternity. I fancied that our lives would be like this some day, united with kindred lover's in the great unknown. Truly I was a dreamer, but dreams were a part of my daily life. Not only that, but sometimes when I was lonely I seemed to see the campfires of my comrades and to share in the bustle of preparation so closely associated with the soldier of France in the days of Napoleon.

I was almost well now, in fact, I felt better and stronger than I had for many months, still I was loth to announce my determination to rejoin my comrades, and I think I would have deferred making that announcement if there had been any other way left open for me. But it seemed the best thing I could think of, for it furnished me with an excuse to declare my love to Marie, who seemed to avoid me as I grew stronger. I had about determined to do this at once when I received a letter from Dr. Murphy. As I read it I was conscious of a thrill of pride at the implied faith in my ability and for the warm honest friendship of this brave man. Then a feeling of anger took possession of me and I began to laugh for I was very angry, but here is the letter as I read it again.

In camp at Alsace,
10th Regiment 2nd Division.

Captain Roul Leclaire,
10th Regiment Chasseurs.

My dear Roul: Your long and continued silence compels me to demand an explanation of the circumstances that warrant it from you. And at the same time, to tell you a bit of the news from the front, for which I am

sure you will be truly grateful, that is, if it does not interfere with your love making to any serious degree. But, risking your eternal displeasure, I will begin by telling you one of the best jokes your ever heard about. Rather say, it would be a fine joke, if it had not turned out so serious as it already has.

We are camped near a regiment of Infantry out here in this neck of the woods and attached to us is Young Montessor, a lieutenant of Engineers and a brother of the young lady who dances daily for your amusement. One of the finest boys I ever had the good fortune to shake hands with, but whose eyesight was injured by a bullet some unmannerly Englishman sent his way about a year ago. Our Mess, in the 10th, thought it would be the right thing to give a big dinner last Thursday (it is now Wednesday), so we made great preparations for the same, and invited about forty outsiders to be present, but you know what a devilish capacity Major LeOrme has for wine. Well, we appointed him as chief steward for the occasion. Which in itself is enough to everlastingly brand us as a bunch of imbeciles. During the afternoon he began to drink divers bottles of the wine, "and it was good wine too." The same being secured only by the greatest strategy, and good fortune, and not a single bottle to spare, mind that now.

Well, after he had finished the fourth bottle, the idea occurred to him, that he would have to account for the stuff, and having been exalted to the realms of bright ideas, he resolved to fill the bottles with cold tea, sweetening it with several handfulls of sugar procured from the stock in the Commissary. And so he continued to drink and be merry, feeling sure the base imposition could hardly be detected.

All went merry as a marriage bell, until the toasts were to be drank. When with boyish fervor, Young Montessor noticing that several new bottles had made their appearance. called for a toast, and when every

glass was filled to the brim, "Let us drink Gentlemen, to one whose star is the brightest of any in the firmament, and may his name continue to be as bright and sparkling, his life and deeds as refreshing as the wine in our glasses tonight."

Roul, you must take my word for it. It was then things began to happen. No true Frenchman would lay down his glass undrained, after a toast like that, but by the beard of the prophet I never felt such a villianous desire to slay somebody in all my life as I did that blessed minute for that old fiend of all fiends had sweetened the tea in the bottles with quinine.

Most of the guests treated the matter as a joke, but a few of the fire eaters would listen to no apologies and declared that it was a premeditated affront, so we have had several outings as a result. LeOrme is in the hospital with a bullet hole through his right shoulder (pity * is that his opponent was not a better shot). Fouray got a slash on the cheek which will forever spoil his manly beauty. I was more successful than others in our troop, for after placing a bullet in the knee of my antagonist, I generously assisted in cutting off his leg. But that is not all of it. Young Montessor has received a visit from a friend of D'Arcy of the 12th. D'Arcy is a fine shot and a clever swordsman, in fact, has a reputation as a duelist, so it would be well if you prepared the little lady there, for bad news regarding her brother.

We miss you sadly, Roul. Your cool counsel and steady hand would be a power here at this very minute. I dined breakfast, then took an active interest in things that several of us have tried by hook or by crook to take the place of Montessor but he refuses to allow us to meddle with it. It is downright murder too, but perhaps the fairies will interfere in his behalf, who knows?

Well, good luck to you, Roul. Write as often as you can, for to the last man we miss you.

Murphy.

P. S.—I have just heard that the affair between Montessor and D'Arcy is postponed two weeks, owing to the fact that Montessor has been sent to make a survey somewhere. M.

How my nerves did tingle when I read that letter. Every vein seemed to be on fire and I resolved to start at once. So while Jean was preparing the horses for the journey, I went into the garden in search of Marie. Never can I forget the picture she made as I approached her. Standing partly screened by a big rose tree, a pair of scissors in her hand, her face red with the pleasure of the work in that warm spring air, the sweetest flower in all her garden, "and even this was no compliment," for flowers bloom early in the south of France.

"Marie," I began, "I have just received a letter from Dr. Murphy. He tells me to come at once if I am able to go."

She drooped her head. Heaven, was that a tear I saw fall from her. Could it be a tear that still glistened on the leaf of the rose. I was bewildered and did not know how to say the words I had come to say to her. But she too seemed confused. Seeing this helped to restore my self possession.

"Marie, dear Marie, I love you devoutly. Will you be my wife?"

I saw her flush, then turn deathly pale, she seemed to tremble as I continued, "Nay, do not answer me now, but at another time. You are all the world to me."

I saw her reel as if about to fall, so on the impulse of the moment I caught her in my arms and pressed her close to my breast. How long this would have lasted I have no power to tell, for I was almost beside myself. I felt her struggling to free herself from my embrace so let her go

"O Roul, my friend, don't tempt me. I am the affianced wife of another, a brother officer, a soldier in the army

of Napoleon. "Go, my friend, honor leaves us only one course to pursue, then farewell."

She extended her hand to me. Scarcely knowing what I did, I knelt and kissed it. Then turning left her and hurried to the gate, where Jean had already arrived with the horses. My eyes were wet and before I could mount, I was forced to brush the tears away, but when once mounted I struck my horse a sharp blow with the lines, and dashed away, unconscious of a pair of small hands outstretched toward me, or the sobbing woman who knelt behind the rosebush where I left her.

CHAPTER III.

The events of the next two hours I have never been able to clearly recall. I felt as if someone had suddenly hit me with something, not with sufficient force to deprive me of the power to feel, just hard enough to daze me, and when at last I recovered my senses sufficiently to make note of my surroundings, my companion was nowhere in sight. My horse was covered with foam and showed other evidence of the terrible pace he had sustained so long. I had never been in that part of the country before, and had not the slightest idea of where I was.

I was not slow to recognize the injustice to my horse, a magnificent animal between whom and myself there existed a bond of affection almost human on his part, and I was proud of him, for he was by long odds the fastest troop horse in the service. I dismounted and led him to the side of the road where I had discovered a spring, there let him have a few mouthfuls of water and let him nibble at the grass along side of the fence, as I walked toward the road house that I now saw in the

distance. In a short time Jean rode up and also dismounted.

Your pardon, Captain, it was impossible for me to keep alongside of you. Then taking a handful of grass he began to rub my horse, all the time talking to him in a manner that elicited a smile from me, which was a great feat, for I was feeling very gloomy at that time.

"You beauty, Mon Dieu, but you have the speed of the wind, you are like a bird, never before did I see your equal, you sweetheart you. I promise to take care of you from this day and if the Captain will only let you run in the races I will back you anywhere.

This and many other promises he made to Marcus, and would undoubtedly have continued, had we not entered the yard of the roadhouse and saw there a number of horses, among them the big bony black, belonging to Dr. Murphy.

Leaving Jean to care for the horses, I was about to enter the door, but halted as I heard my name spoken in a loud and laughing manner.

"Just wait until LeClaire gets here, and take my word for it some of those gallants will have a handful, but he will not be here for sometime yet, worse luck. Come on landlord, another bottle here. Back luck to the old nagur. There, that's better," as the landlord approached with a bottle. "Drink and be merry boys, 'tis a soldier's duty to drink and die, but live as long as you can first."

It is evident that the worthy Doctor had drank as much as was good for him, so I entered the room feeling sure that he would stop for a time at least, nor was I mistaken, his hand was arrested on its way to his mouth. The glass dropped with a crash to the floor. He gazed at me for an instant, then with a shout of joy sprang toward me, upsetting his own chair as he arose and tripping over the feet of one of his companions. I reached him just in time to prevent an ugly fall, and after an earnest embrace he introduced me to his companions, all of whom were total strangers to me.

"Gentlemen," he began, "gentlemen, allow me to introduce to you Roul LeClaire. He is one of us, and that's recommend enough to win the love and regard, of any man in the service of Napoleon.

"Roul, these gentlemen are as lordly a bunch as you ever set your two eyes on. We were discussing affairs over at the camp, which is about two miles from here, (just over the hill), when you came in. How are you feeling my boy," he inquired, anxiously.

I assured him that I never felt better in my life, and was disconcerted by his smile, and the dig in the ribs he gave me.

"You sly dog," he continued, "and is there to be a Mrs. LeClaire?"—or—He glanced slyly at my face, and what he saw there, must have conveyed an answer to his question, for, turning to the Major, he continued:

"As I was saying when the Captain entered, things will change speedily now Major, for the Captain here has a habit of smiling in the eye of an adversary, and what is more to the point, shooting true, and beside that he can beat the Devil with a single stick. It's mighty kind his parents were to give him such a sunny disposition, for he never picks a quarrel, but he never refuses to fight.

I was embarrassed by the personal nature of the Doctor's remarks and Pallisone must have noted that fact, for with rare good judgment he interrupted the Doctor.

"Captain, the affair we were discussing is that of D'Arcy, and Lieutenant Montessor, who is expected to return to-night, it is nothing less than murder, for the boy has not good eyesight, on the contrary. D'Arcy is an noted shot. We have tried to get D'Arcy to withdraw the insult, pointing out the physical imperfections of his opponent, thus enabling both men to withdraw with honor. D'Arcy politely hinted that it was none of our business, and Montessor was indignant, so what are we to do in the matter"?

"That's it," broke in the Doctor, "what can we do. Roul, you who have had so many of such experiences, should be

able to suggest some plan of action, besides that, they are the devils own crowd, those fusillers, for nearly every day some of them has an affair, 'D'Honneur," they call it, and it's about time they had a check in their madness."

"How long will it take us to ride to quarters"? I inquired.

"O, plenty of time to start home." was the answer, "we can make it in twenty minutes.

"It is after five o'clock now suppose we start at once"? They readily agreed to this, and in a few moments we were mounted, and on our way, I had a plan to prevent the meeting of Montressor and D'Arcy. I was not acquainted with any of the 12th, so felt that I was master of the situation. On arriving at my tent I was joyfully received by my servant, who, seeing me coming, had selected a fresh suit of clothing for me, I had barely time to put it on, and wash the dust from my face, when the bugle sounded the call, and I felt happy then, for it was my first meal in our mess tent, in nearly four months. I was just starting on my mission, when I encountered the Doctor and Pallison, whose quarters were near my own.

"Doctor, I would appreciate the company of the Major for a few moments, if you can spare him. As I said this, I linked my arm in that of the Major and led him away, leaving the Doctor staring after us, and undecided whether to follow or not. A few hurried instructions to the Major and we entered the mess tent of the 12th. As we crossed the threshold, there was a lull in the laughter of the officers there, all of whom seemed to be in a very merry mood. We stopped long enough to give our salute to those nearest the entrance, and then, following the glance of Pallison, I at once selected D'Arcy, as the tall man near the center of the table. Mentally, I contrasted his appearance with my own, and decided that I was his superior, in a physical sense. I was smiling, as was my custom, 'when most in earnest.' As I approached him he raised his head and stared haughtily, and, was it a fancy, or did I detect a sneer on his lips.

"Captain D'Arcy," I inquired. He arose and made me a formal bow.

"I am LeClaire of the 10th. Sorry to disturb you Captain, but my business is of such importance, that I could not wait.

"Be seated, Captain," he invited, as he turned a chair toward me. I was about finished, or if you prefer it we will adjourn to my tent.

"No," I answered, "I prefer to talk here. The fact is I came to talk over your coming affair with Lieutenant Montressor.

"I shall kill him," he replied.

"But Captain, would that be honorable, his eyesight is bad, and he is in no way a match for you."

"He brought it on himself," was the rejoinder, this, with a shrug as he turned to walk away.

Rising to my feet, I placed my hand on his shoulder, and spoke loud enough for every person present to hear.

"Captain D'Arcy. Please withdraw the words that forced Lieutenant Montressor to seek this meeting. It is unfair to yourself to gain a reputation by fighting a man so nearly blind.

"Mon Dieu," he shouted, "do you dare"?

I laughed aloud at this, and slapped his face. He made a struggle to reach me, but I held him back easily.

Captain D'Arcy, you will recall the words, which forced young Montressor to seek this meeting. It is the only honorable course left open to you, the honor of your Mess demands it. What must your friends think of you, when they know you choose to fight, because you know you are in no great danger, while at the same time you are an expert shot.

The unusual scene had drawn the attention of every person in the tent, and I could see, that most of them were impressed with my words. I felt then, that there was not a man among them, who did not agree with me, for the 12th prided itself, on the quality, of both Officers and men.

"There stands my friend," I continued, "he will act for

me. You must retract and apologize to Montessor, or fight me first your honor. The Honor of the 12th, leave you no alternative, either apologize to him, or fight me first.

I turned to leave the tent, smiling at those who were near the door, when a shout of warning caused me to turn quickly. D'Arcy had drawn his sword, and was springing toward me. I had not time to draw my own weapon, but my hand coming in contact, with a pan on the table I raised, and threw it with all my might at his head. As it struck him fairly, he staggered backward, and fell heavily to the floor.

I had heard, that a saucepan was a most convincing argument at times, when used with energy and skill, but nowhere had I ever heard anyone say anything of a sauce pan filled with flour gravy. As the pan rebounded, it's contents were splashed and scattered all over D'Arcy. As he struggled to his feet, he looked so comical, that I could not contain myself, so burst out in a fit of uncontrollable laughter. The Major had picked up D'Arcy's sword, and stood smiling. A glance in the faces of several who stood near me, showed me that my action, though somewhat extraordinary, was not condemned. For the true soldier is ever an advocate of fair play, and the 12th, was a regiment of fighting men.

Lightly touching my cap to those nearest me, I proceeded to my own mess tent, and found all of our's waiting for me, having agreed to give me a hearty welcome *En Masse*. As I entered the door I was thrown into confusion, by the three hearty cheers with which they greeted me. I was extremely tired, for the exertion of the day, after my long rest, was almost as much as I could bear, so pleading this as an excuse, I retired early, only to fall asleep, thinking of the one person who had ever made me tremble, Marie Montessor.

CHAPTER IV.

It seemed as if I had hardly spent an hour, when I was awakened by the sound of the bugle, but a hasty glance at my watch showed me that it was roll call, and before I had time to dress myself, Murphy and Pallisone, had entered.

"What the devil do you mean Roul?" began the Doctor. "Here you are just returned from the very verge of the grave, and before you have a single chance to steady your nerve, or test your muscle, have already picked a fight with one of the best swordsmen in the army, and beside that letting him select the weapons, are you a fool entirely man?"

I had just begun to wash myself, and my arms were bare to the shoulder, so, turning, I patted my muscles, saying at the same time:

"Look at that Doctor." He smiled as he gripped me, at first lightly, tenderly, as he would have handled a child, then as a look of wonder appeared on his face, more severely.

"You are a wonder Roul, but then, you have had no practice lately, and will still be at a disadvantage."

"No, Doctor," I replied, I am at no disadvantage, for I have taken regular exercise with Jean, you know how skilful he is, well I am fully his equal now, if not his superior."

"Well," broke in the Major, "you will need all your strength, and courage, too, for tomorrow morning at daybreak, you are to meet D'Arcy, it is all arraigned now, he has even gone so far as to write a letter of apology, to Lieutenant Montessor. And has asked the young man to recall the challenge. This letter he has intrusted to me to deliver, but he blusters about what he will do to you. However, I could not get him to consent to meet you earlier than tomorrow.

"Mon Dieu," he commenced, then burst into a regular shriek of laughter. This was continued so long and violently, that the Doctor becoming alarmed, siezed the basin of water I had just washed in, and dashed it in the Major's face. For an instant, this seemed to have the desired effect, but once again, to our utter amazement, he laughed louder and harder than ever.

"By the Heaven's Roul, the man's clean mad," he exclaimed, "it's a straight jacket he needs," and gripping the Major around the neck, he bent him backward across my army chest, until finally exhausted. The Major ceased to struggle or laugh.

"I could not help it, Roul," he explained. "When I thought of how you handled that saucepan, I had to laugh, everybody is laughing at it today. The story has been told over the corps, and D'Arcy is the butt of ridicule. He will be laughed out of the army. I have been laughing nearly all the time since it happened, but when the Doctor threw that water in my face, I—I.

With a quick movement of his foot, Murphy kicked the feet from under the Major and the shock he sustained, assisted him materially in quelling another outburst, which seemed so imminent. Finally, having regained his breath, he eyed the Doctor reproachfully, then turning to me, he said:

"Swords are the weapons Roul. Time, daylight tomorrow. place. The little clearing on the right of the bridge we crossed last night. Now, when you have a few moments to spare, I would like to try you out with a single stick, for D'Arcy is an noted fencer.

"Me, too, I want to feel that you are not going like a lamb to the slaughter, for I have heard some remarkable stories about that man."

In the course of an hour we had returned to my tent, where I found Jean Baptiste, the trooper, awaiting me.

"Captain, it will be necessary for you to give me an order, so that I may take charge of Marcus, he looks fit to run for a kingdom this morning.

"Very well Jean, you shall have the order. But how do you feel about a little exercise this morning"? The Doctor and the Major need a trimming, so we will give them a good beating.

He glanced at me and grinned, then without a word, threw aside his coat and tightened his belt several holes. I was curious to know how good the Major could fence, so handing the sticks to my friends, I said:

"You two first, I want to watch you play for a while before Jean and I set too. And when you have rested, we will try you out.

They set to it with a will, and I was pleased to note, that the Major was far from clumsy, while the Doctor was a fine swordsman, and easily had the best of the bout.

Now be easy, don't strain yourself, Major, sure and it's bad policy to get overheated at the start. It gives your opponent a chance to—

What the Doctor was going to say was lost in a groan, as the Major swung low, and hit him on the ankle, for a moment they rested while the Doctor rubbed himself with some linament. Picking up his stick, he resumed his place.

On guard there, now may your Angel save you, for it's sausage I'll make of you. That was a low down trick, to hit a man on the shin, you should have higher ambitions than that, like this for instance. (rapping the Major on the head). Never seek an opening below the belt, for if you do, it takes too long to recover, and might be the cause of a calamity, to you.

I could see that the Major was outranked, but he was so strong and quick, that I concluded to give him the exercise necessary, to make him an expert swordsman. Stopping the bout, I faced the Doctor.

"This is what I have waited for," he exclaimed, "for I have a fancy you need it. You spalpeen, that you are, what kind of fencing do you call that? Playing a trick like that, when I was talking so civilly to you, shame on you man."

Our sticks had met with a snap. A slide in *force*, a quick

jerk and instep, then the Doctor's stick struck the wall of my tent. He looked his amazement, while he continued to talk, but when I looked at the Major, he was vigorously patting his snuff box and looking at me in unbelief. Having resumed his position, we began again, and while he parried at a thrust en carte, I tapped him on the neck, a trick I had learned from Jean, who favored me with a sly wink, just as I disarmed him for the second time.

"Now, by the powers," he exploded, "there was no accident in that. I thought so the first time, but not now."

Jean had picked up the stick, and now my real tryout was about to begin, so I carefully wiped my hands and adjusted my belt before facing him. I am free to confess that Jean improved with every day, and at every exercise seemed to have something new, but at the end of fifteen minutes, as neither of us had succeeded in penetrating the defense of the other, we stopped the bout. The Major extended his hand to Jean, something he had never done before to any man in the ranks.

"Excellent," he exclaimed, "you amaze me. I do not believe there is your equal in the world, unless it is the Captain."

The Doctor had taken hold of my hand, and was feeling my pulse. He turned to the Major with a smile, but said nothing. Having set a time to meet Jean in the afternoon, I handed him a paper. As he read it, his face lit with a glow of pleasure, and when I extended my hand he grasped it with the grip of a friend, and that friendship proved stronger and truer, more self-sacrificing and enduring than I had a right to expect from any man.

"Doctor Murphy and Major Pallisone," I said, "allow me to present Sergeant Baptiste, a man worthy of shoulder straps, which I hope he may soon wear."

"I, too," began the Major. "I, too," said the Doctor. "I will assist you whenever I can. And I will see to your advancement, if I have to put every officer in the service on the sick list."

My three friends separated at the door, each going his way, while I, after making a call on my commanding officer, spent the rest of the day fencing with Jean whom I invited to accompany me to the place of meeting on the following morning. There was a party at a farm house near by, that evening, to which most of our Mess had been invited. This gave me a chance to go to bed early.

"Just look at that now, sleeping like a lamb, would you think he was going out to cut a man's throat this morning? Its such sublime innocence as this that always makes a fool out of me, so it is. Here am I without a wink of sleep all this blessed night, and there he is, never missed a wink since eight o'clock, I warrant you."

"Better wake him up," suggested the Major. "He will hardly have time to take a cup of coffee, before we have to start."

"Good morning, gentlemen," I began, "you are early are you not? I will be ready in a minute.

Although I could hardly keep my word, it was not long before I joined them, we were met at the door by Jean, who had been waiting at the door for us. This nettled me a little, so after replying to his good morning, I said:

"Jean, I want you to understand, that on the field, or in matters pertaining to the army, I am your Officer. But at all other times, your friend. You should not wait outside my door, but come in, do you understand me"?

For answer he offered me his hand, which I still held when we entered the dining room, where the Doctor, by skilful handling of the cook, had some fine hot coffee and rolls prepared for us, and a short time after, we arrived at the bridge.

"If the early bird catches the worm that man on horse-back must have a load of them," said the Doctor, as he pointed to someone riding away from the bridge, as we approached it.

For some reason, D'Arcy was late, but I thought nothing of that, until after considerable time had elapsed, when the Major began to swear roundly.

"We will never be able to do anything here this morning if they delay much longer.

"Keep cool man," advised the Doctor, "the sun will soon be up and it will be warm enough then, without—but here are some of the party."

Two men, whom we recognized as officers of the 12th were hurrying toward us. It was plain to see that they were greatly agitated, even before they said a word.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," one of them began, panting for breath between his words, "our principle has disappeared. there can be no meeting this morning, unless your principle will accept one of us as a substitute." The last words addressed to the Major, while looking directly at myself.

To say that I was bewildered, would fall far short of expressing my feelings. I was amazed. Never before had I heard of an officer and a gentleman, failing in an affair of this kind. I noticed that the Major was in earnest conversation with the strangers, but as they now spoke in an ordinary tone of voice, and had moved a little distance away, I could not hear their conversation. Full well I knew the record of the 12th, jealous of their honor, to a degree, that made them very unpopular in the army. Always ready to fight on the slightest provocation, dying with a smile, to avenge some fancied slight to the army as a whole, and to any member of the 12th in particular. Jean and the Doctor, a short distance away, were watching the trio, so left to myself, I had plenty of time to form a plan, and decide on my future conduct, at last the Major approached me.

Roul, Captain LeBlanc and Major Soliel, are the officers who were acting for D'Arcy. It appears that when they went to his tent this morning, they arrived just as someone was leaving it, but in the dim light they did not see who it was. Entering his tent, they found his things scattered around in confusion, while several whisky bottles laying in front of his bed, showed that he had been drinking heavily. A hurried search for D'Arcy, disclosed the fact, that he went to the stable, where the hostler assisted him to mount.

as he was too drunk to get on his horse without assistance, then he rode away. It was probably him we saw, leaving here, as we arrived. LeBlanc and Soliel, hurriedly awoke other Officers of the regiment, and a council was held, so they decided that the honor of the regiment demanded that one of them meet you. You have a perfect right to select the man you desire to meet from the officers of their regiment, at the same time, both of these gentlemen beg that you select one of them, both being ready to die, rather than have this stain on the record of the 12th.

Linking my arm in that of the Major, I motioned for the Doctor and Jean to approach, then crossed to the men from the 12th.

"Gentlemen," I said, "at your council this morning, you decided that I have the right to select my opponent from your roster. Is this your decision"?

Both men bowed gravely in reply.

That being the case, I will do myself the honor of selecting an adversary at the noon day meal today, although I recognize the fact that you two, have the first right to that honor, and are without a doubt, the most accomplished men in the 12th. Please have all your officers present if possible.

So we walked back to camp together, the Doctor and Major looking at me in a manner that would have made me laugh, under other circumstances, but I restrained myself rather than offend the men of the 12th, whom I knew, were already too deeply mortified.

On our arrival, we found everyone busy, cleaning arms, removing garbage, or doing something to make our quarters look better, and learned that Napoleon and his Staff had arrived, and, as was his custom, was even now inspecting everything pertaining to our quarters, so I ate a hurried breakfast, then took an active interest in things that had long been strange to me.

At a quarter to twelve, I was ready, and waiting for the Major. Jean was already with me, for I had resolved to do

all in my power to bring Jean to the attention of his superior officers, feeling sure, that he would be recognized the sooner, by my friendly efforts in his behalf.

CHAPTER V.

As we approached the tent of the 12th, we could hear the sound of laughter, and of many voices, all trying to say something at once. The Major halted, and looked me fairly in the eye for an instant then said:

"Roul, we are in the dark regarding what you intend doing, but I want to say, that there is no precedent for this, and you are under no obligation to select, or fight any of them."

"Trust me," I answered, then entered the tent.

"On the instant, the hand of every officer was raised in salute, and all remained standing until we had ranged ourselves alongside of the table, I noticed, that there was wine in every glass, although it seemed that none had been touched, and several glasses stood in front of my escort, I glanced around and saw that nearly every officer of the 12th was present.

"Gentlemen of the 12th," I began. "Like all of you I am a soldier of France, and by the favor of Napoleon, have been selected as an officer in this great army. Officers and Soldiers, I have always heard the 12th spoken of in words of praise, both for the Officers and the men of the line. Your bravery has never been questioned, your record is a glorious one, but that record belongs to the whole army, to France, and to Napoleon, and is as carefully guarded in the heart of every man in the service, as it is in your own. No act of any one man can weigh against the whole, no personal disgrace of any man, can bring any discredit to the 12th, you are above that. You are Officers of Napoleon, made glorious by the confi-

dence he reposes in you. You, like myself, have a duty to fulfill, it is to fight for one we all love. But if we must fight, let it be against our enemies, not against our brothers. If we must kill, let us kill our common foe, but die if need be in defense of each other. Gentlemen, I have never refused to fight, but in everything, have tried to conduct myself as an officer and a gentleman, and for that reason, I am here today, to tell you, that I do not desire to meet any of you, to settle the quarrel of one who was alien among you. Rather do I ask you to join me in a toast, to the Army of Napoleon, and particularly to the 12th, for which I have the greatest respect. Gentlemen, I drink to you.

The wine was drank amid a torrent of applause, and for the time, I thought they would never quit cheering me, but as if by magic every one became still, and come to attention. I turned to see Napoleon, and several members of his Staff entering the tent. He walked directly to me and looked up to my eyes, then demanded:

"What are you doing here, sir"..

In my confusion, I could hardly speak, and made several attempts to do so, without uttering a sound.

"And this man, too," he added, pointing his finger at Jean.

I was surprised at the boldness of my answer, but fear that harm should come to my friend, made me bold.

"A Sergeant, in my troop, sir, a brave man, also capable, and educated. I believe him to be the best swordsman in the world.

Napoleon looked for an instant at Jean, who stood the inspection far better than I did, then turning to me, he continued:

"Colonel, there is a vacancy in your command, that of Troop K. See to it that this man is installed, as it's Captain and Commander."

I was bewildered. Troop K was my own troop. Was I to be thus publicly degraded, but no, he had called me Colonel.

"Gentlemen," continued Napoleon, "I was at your door

and heard the words of this Officer, and for this, I honor and promote him. I am pleased that you have met his advances in the same spirit, sir." Turning to me: "Favor me by dining with me this evening." Then he left us. He had scarcely left the tent, when a wild cheer arose among the men of the 12th, then both Jean and myself were overwhelmed with congratulations.

"By the heavens, Roul, but you'll be a general some day," began the Doctor, after I had taken possession of my new quarters, which was the tent formerly occupied by Colonel Lascelles.

It seems like a story from fairyland, and Jean, too,—but do you mind Colonel, I had my eye on that boy for a long time now, and selected him to stay with you, because I knew you were rather fond of him, but I never dreamed of anything like this. Never.

"Dreamed," I exclaimed as I suddenly recalled a dream, when at the home of the Montessor's, and the almost exact fulfillment. So I told the Doctor all about my stay there, of my love for Marie, of the dream, and of its final outcome.

"Wonderful," he exclaimed, "wonderful. Just look at it from any angle. Mind you too Roul, you saved the life of Montessor, and that was what your dream predicted, and mind me, Roul, you are doomed to be a grand-father some day. and when the fair Marie places her hand in yours, and you have renounced the life of a soldier, I'll be waiting for an invitation to say the first blessing, over the head of your first born." But did you hear that Montessor had returned and was greatly disappointed because he was bereaft of the chance to be killed, instead of being properly thankful for it.

"No," I replied, "but then I hardly think there was a great deal of danger to him the way it turned out.

"Make no mistake, Roul, there was danger, great danger for that matter. Captain D'Arcy, in the normal state is no coward, but it was the way you acted that got the best of his nerves. And he whisky he drank to steady them, for

the time being, got the best of him, but believe me, Roul, you'll hear from him again some day. Here comes young Montressor, now you have a real problem to handle."

As Albert Montressor entered my tent, I advanced to meet him with extended hand, and led him to a stool, the Doctor making a pretence of being busy, with some papers on the table.

"Colonel," began Montressor, "I hope you will pardon me for seeking this interview, but I could not rest until I knew the truth. Did you interfere in my affair because you thought I was not able to take care of myself?"

"No, I did not, but I had grown tired of the silly practice, that seemed to have such a hold among our best men, and so I made up my mind to stop it. I am sure that you will agree with me, that the end justified the means. For already, there is a marked improvement in the relations and intercourse of our troops at this place."

Here, said the Doctor, as he handed Montressor a paper. Here is a letter from Captain D'Arcy. In it he makes due amends to you. I have a way of thinking, it was the only logical way to end our late misunderstanding with some people. At the same time the Colonel there owes a great deal to the Montressor family. But read your letter.

This was a difficult feat for Albert, as his eyes were so injured, that he had to hold the letter very close to his eyes. A happy thought occurred to me. An old schoolmate of mine had now become famous as an oculist, and was practising his calling at Bolougne. Why not send Albert there for treatment. I owed that much at least to his sister. I had plenty of money, and somehow I suspicioned, that it was the lack of money, that prevented him from securing expert assistance. So hastily, I penned a note to Doctor Renaud, telling him what I wanted, and inclosed money to pay the expense of Montressor. Having finished reading the letter of apology, Montressor arose to go, when I arrested him by saying:

"Lieutenant, I have a message to deliver to Doctor Renaud

in Boulogne, it is of great importance, and I desire a messenger whom I can trust. Will you deliver this message for me, I will secure a furlough for you."

With quick precision he brought his heels together, and raised his hand to salute. He remained at attention, until I handed him the letter.

"It may take the Doctor several weeks, or even months to do as I desire, but you will remain with him, until he sends you back. He is a celebrated oculist, and I have asked him to do what he can for you."

I saw a smile, a wonderful smile of hope pass over the face of Albert. But it disappeared in an instant.

"How soon can you start, Lieutenant?"

"At once, sir."

"Then start immediately, and may good luck attend you."

"Now may the Saints be good to you, Roul," exploded the Doctor. "There is real hope for the boy, but it needs just such a master hand as you are sending him to, and if I do say it, there is a party by the name of Murphy, who wants to have a hand in this. So here is my order placing him on the hospital list. This is indefinite, and will let him stay as long as is necessary, and does away with the need of applying for furlough."

"Thank you Colonel. Thank you Doctor," was all that Albert could say, as he seized each by the hand, then hurried away.

I looked after him, as he left my tent, and was attracted by the approach of Colonel Besant, of the 12th. As I met him at the door, he forgot the formality of a salute, but placing his hands on my shoulder, would have embraced me, had I not divined his intention, and stepped inside.

"Your generous action today, has just been reported to me, and I want to be the first to welcome you to your new grade. The 12th will follow you to a man, for you won their hearts today. Dam it, man, but I am proud to

call you my friend." Then he wiped a tear from his eye, his emotion, almost mastering him. I poured out three glasses of wine.

"Here's to your good health, and to the glory of the 12th," I said.

"And the 10th," he shouted, "and the 10th, may they go shoulder to shoulder through ever danger, and—"

"Furnish the Doctors with plenty of work," broke in Murphy. Then may the lord love you both. So we drank the tripple toast, and after a few moments Besant departed, for Napoleon was in camp.

I had many callers that afternoon, and not an idle moment. The visit of Napoleon was taken as an indication of increased activities, and many were the guesses made regarding the next move. About the middle of the afternoon an orderly arrived with a letter, and a parcel from my old Colonel Lascelles. The letter I stopped to read before I opened the parcel.

To Roul Leclaire,
Colonel 10th Regiment Chasseurs.

My dear Roul:—I have no words to express the satisfaction I feel at your promotion. You deserved it, and I am proud of it. Also permit me to say through you, to Captain Baptiste, that I welcome him to the line. Truly I have reason to rejoice, that I am still to remain with you, having become a General of Bridgade, through your glorious achievement of today. Both the 10th and 12th, being part of my brigade. I inclose my epaulets, hat and saddle mountings, as they are all nearly new. They will do until you have time to supply yourself with others. I remain your friend.

LASCELLES.

To say I was delighted would hardly express my feelings. I had already turned over my traps to Jean and wanted to look my best at the reception given by Napoleon that evening, so as I was very busy assisting my servant

to fasten the epaulets on my coat, when a burst of music in front of my quarters surprised me, and on stepping outside, I was delighted to see the splendid band of the 12th. They were giving me a serenade. How my heart swelled within me, as I listened to that music, and I wondered for a moment, what would she say, if she were here. Then I remembered that she was the affianced bride of another, a soldier in the army of Napoleon.

Having thanked the members of the band for their courtesy, I began making preparations for the reception, first having intrusted the Doctor to make a present to Jean, of a horse, a big roan, nearly, if not quite so strong and swift as Marcus, for I had reason to think that Jean had not the money to properly equip himself.

I arrived at the hotel, which the Emperor had selected as his headquarters, a little early, but early as I was, many officers were already assembled in the ante rooms, and many jests were made about each other. I, being a stranger among them, could fully enjoy each brilliant sally, without the inconvenience of being the butt of any. I learned that Napoleon was having a consultation with his Generals of this, the Second Division, after which the banquet would begin. At times an Aide would appear, and calling a name, some officer would be admitted to the consultation. I was greatly surprised to hear my own name called. The rumor of my promotion had been freely discussed that day, and as I responded to the call, many curious eyes were looking in my direction.

The aide conducted me to the presence of the Emperor. As we approached I noticed that Colonel Besant and General Lascells were already in consultation with Marshal Ney, while Marshal Soult and the Emperor, were discussing a map before them. As I approached General Lascells advanced with outstretched hand.

Roul, he said, I rejoice with you, and have recommended you to the Emperor, who is about to send you on a mission of great importance.

Then followed the greeting of Marshal Ney, the man whom our Emperor had named, the bravest of the Brave. I seemed to hear, as in a dream, the words of this peerless leader.

"I, too, congratulate you Colonel. But your promotion was due you. I have often admired the way you handled your men, your youth only, prevented your promotion long ago.

I do not remember what I said, but it pleased them, for they began to laugh, and the quick ear of Napoleon, catching my words, he led in the laughter, I had so innocently caused.

"Colonel, we have selected you to perform a part in a delicate mission. You will choose four of the best swordsmen in your regiment to assist you, men on whose courage, cunning and fidelity, you can depend. No matter what their rank may be, they shall be under your command. Your General will give you full instructions tomorrow. We are placing the greatest confidence in you, in fact, you will be my personal representative, the Messenger of Napoleon."

I looked him steadily in the eye, as I made my salute. He smiled that rare magnetic smile, the smile that won the heart of men and bound them to him, and made them ready to do or die for the glory of France. It is small wonder then, that I was proud of the confidence he was about to repose in me, and for the rest of the evening, I seemed to hear the words ringing in my ears, floating on the air, everywhere, "You are the Messenger of Napoleon."

At last the doors were thrown open, and those in the ante-rooms were invited to enter. The gayety of the scene, made a great impression on me who had never taken a part in anything of the kind before. I noticed that few were there who were below the rank of Colonel, because, Napoleon did not distribute his social favors with the same spirit here, as he did in Paris.

The evening passed pleasantly, and without any special incident to make, or mar, the harmony of the occasion.

True, no one could be a part of such a gathering, and feel anything but the greatest goodwill for every other man present, but at the same time many were there, who were jealous of any special mark of attention to another, and I wondered if, after all, there could exist, that same good-fellowship, among them on the field, or in the discharge of their social duties.

I only drank one glass of wine during the evening, but I noticed several times that the eyes of the Emperor were fixed on me when I happened to glance in his direction. This became annoying, so about eleven o'clock, pleading a headache as my excuse, I left the fete, and went to my quarters.

As I threw myself on my bed, thoroughly tired with the incidents of the day, the face of Marie Montessor seemed to look at me, and encourage me on. Yes, there she stood at the foot of my bed, and more, too, I could see in fancy, the room where I had lain, during my illness, hear her sweet voice as she told me of her brother. I could see her again, as she stood by the rose bush. I knew that I was not asleep, because I pulled my hair to make sure of that, then I looked again, she still stood at the foot of my bed, but it was in another room, a room strange to me, and as I looked, I could see an iron grating across the window of the room, I saw her cross to the door and try to open it, but it resisted her efforts, then with tears in her eyes, she turned to me, and stretched her hands toward me, at the same time imploring, "Roul, Roul. Save me."

Was I dreaming, or were my senses leaving me.

Full well I knew that she was safe at home, but I was so excited that I would have started to her assistance at once, had not Doctor Murphy and Major Pallisone entered my tent. They had been waiting to hear my report of the evening, and seeing the light in my tent, had come over. I was glad of their company, for they helped me to regain control of my shattered nerves. In the

short time of forty-eight hours, I had been rejected by the only woman I ever loved, had picked a quarrel to save her brother, driven an officer out of the army, had been promoted by Napoleon himself, shook hands with the two great Marshals, Ney and Soult, and last, but most wonderful of all, had been selected for special duty, by Napoleon himself.

As I fell asleep, I could hear the voice of the Emperor saying, "Remember you are a Messenger of Napoleon," but above all, I could hear the sweet voice of Marie Montessor, pleading, "Roul, Roul. Save me."

CHAPTER VI.

It was late the following morning when I awoke, calling my servant, I ordered breakfast, then sent an orderly to summon Jean, in the meantime dressing myself, smiling over the affairs of yesterday. Breakfast and Jean arrived about the same time, so, calling for another cup and plate, we sat down to eat together.

He was so profuse in his thanks for the horse and trimmings I gave him, that he almost made me regret I had no more that he could use. Well of such things life is composed. We do sometimes, what we think is best, then feel annoyed because we have not done better. As yet I had told him nothing of my mission, but was every moment expecting to be called by General Lascelles and wanted Jean to be ready as soon as I received my orders, for I had fully decided that he should be one of my party.

"Jean," I said, "will you see to it that both our horses are well shod, also the Doctor's horse, and pick a man from your company who may be relied upon, and have his horse also attended to? Get everything in readiness

for a journey and meet me here when I return from headquarters." I had concluded not to wait for the summons but to report to the General at once.

Jean arose at the same time to obey my instructions and I started for headquarters where I was at once ushered into the presence of my chief, who smiled good-naturedly as I entered.

"Roul," began the General, as he took my hand, "I am proud of you—proud that a man of my command should be the one selected for this mission. Your words of yesterday pleased the Emperor so well that he resolved to trust you to ferret out a mystery at the Capitol, but even after he had notified you of his selection he watched you closely all evening to make sure that he had made no mistake. If you had drank the wine as some did, had you talked as some did, had you acted as some did, the Emperor would not have allowed you to go on this errand; but you bore the inspection well, and he is satisfied with you. You will succeed, I am sure of that, and some day I look to see you a General of Division, out-ranking myself, but such is the law of fitness and I am indeed glad it is you.

"It appears that during the last four months many of our plans have been anticipated by the enemy, and information has been furnished them, that leads the Emperor to suspect some of his most trusted officers of treason. In fact, someone has impersonated the Emperor several times, and the deception has been so clever that it has deceived such a man as Marshal Duroc. So, you must understand, you have a very cunning and dangerous opponent. It is believed that this traitor is now in Paris or Marsailles, and that he is working in harmony with a number of spies, who would not hesitate to kill you, anywhere they met you, if they suspected your true character. You are in full command of all civil and military assistance that you may need, with money plenty to defray every expense. You may go as an officer, or you

may disguise yourself as you may see fit, reporting your progress once every ten days, either in person or by one of those who you select to accompany you. You have the advantage of being a stranger in Paris and not very well known as an officer. Not because you have not been tried on the field, but because you always avoid the society of women and are not petted and spoiled by them. Everything is in your favor, and I am sure you will win. You may tell as much of what I have told you to your escort as you deem necessary, or nothing, as you please; but it is well to have them know what they are to do should anything happen to you. Select the best horses obtainable and the best men, too. Now follow me into the presence of the Emperor, who will give you private instructions."

Arising, we approached the inner door of the double dining room, where the guards halted us and reported our names. We were at once admitted to the presence of the Emperor, who was standing at the fire-place, his shoulder leaning against the mantle. As we entered his eyes sought my own and never left my face as we approached him. He graciously returned the salute we gave him and inquired:

"You have told him what we expect of him?"

"Yes, Your Excellency," replied Lascelles.

The Emperor nodded toward a group of officers standing near the window. Lascelles then joined them. The Emperor, seating himself, pointed to a chair, and motioned me to draw it near and be seated.

"You understand the duties you have been selected for," he inquired.

"Yes, Your Excellency, so far as it has been explained to me."

Thereupon he briefly reviewed my instructions, then added the further information: "No matter where you see me, you will say the words, France, Fidelity. If I do not answer, Justice—remember the word, Justice, then it is

not Napoleon you have addressed. But, if I do answer, Justice, I will place my hand on my breast in this manner, and you will know that it is Napoleon. This ring you will use only in case of necessity. If you should need assistance of any kind, from any General of the army, any officer of state, or police agent of superior powers, it will bring to your support money and men. Remember, you are to discover who impersonates me—those who plot to assassinate me. Now prove you are worthy of the confidence I have placed in you, and win your brigade, and don't forget the pass-word."

Here he handed me his ring, then extended his hand, which I kissed and turned away to be joined by Lascelles, who led me to the ante-room, handed me an envelope containing money and letters of introduction to friends in Paris and Marsailles, also passports for myself and escorts.

"Roul, my boy," he said, "you, at the beginning of your career, have accomplished much. You are already a favorite of the Emperor—a favorite because you have not been spoiled by the seductive agency of either a woman's wiles or the tempting offers made by agents of the Bourbon Party; both woman and honor will be used to tempt you. They will try to win you from your allegiance with caresses and promises, but I trust you, and Napoleon trusts you, and though the mission is one of danger, I know you will win."

Again he wrung my hand and turned away. I hurried back to my own tent where I found the Major, Dr. Murphy and Jean, anxiously awaiting my return. I told them of the duty we were expected to perform, and each having declared a readiness to start at once, there remained then only the selection of another member of my escort. After a few moments' discussion, we decided upon a young Corsican Corporal, a man of great strength and daring, and, as Jean expressed it, "one who really delighted in anything savoring of mystery, and would leave

a well-cooked dinner any time for the pleasure of fighting, no matter what the cause, no matter what the odds, or which side he took. All he cared for was the joy of battle itself."

We decided to discard our uniforms or at least all insignia of rank, and to travel as a Corporal and his Guard, so, for the time being placed Pellitier in command. Our uniforms were loaded into a wagon ready to accompany us, and in an hour we had left the camp behind and were approaching the road house where I met my companions a few days before. A few miles further on the road forked, one of the forks leading to Meyieres the other Roeroi, where I first met Marie Montessor, so I planned to pass that hoping that I might be favored by a sight of the girl I loved. General Davoust was encamped near the town of Montredy, and in his division were many of the best families of France, the very flower of French chivalry, men who had followed the peerless Bonapart, even past the Pyramids of Egypt, who had parted with fortune, home and friends, to share the dangers and glories of their leader, and who felt themselves well paid for every cut, bruise or suffering if he only gave them a word or look of approval.

Not far away, at and around the town of Esch, the Austrians and Russians were assembling in force, and it was evident that a great battle would soon be fought. Each army selected the most favorable ground for their maneuvers, and many were the skirmishes between small portions of rival troops.

Many French Royalists had joined the forces of the Austrians, doing all in their power to accomplish the defeat of Napoleon, and to restore the Bourbons to the throne of France. To them it meant fortune, favor and position. No wonder then, that they left no stone unturned to win the Empire for him they regarded their rightful sovereign, helping their friends and hating their enemies to such extent that if they once suspected another, a word or look was sufficient excuse to be called on

formally to explain the cause, only to be settled after the offender had paid the penalty in full. If one failed, there were others to take up the fight, and so it continued, until the offender was unable to do any injury to the cause. It was impossible to know who was on the side of Napoleon or who favored Louis, but for that matter, there were agents of Napoleon amongst the closest friends of Phillip, and many officers of our army were ready to forsake our peerless leader, at a signal from some one not yet known, who had been selected to lead in the great movement to restore the Bourbons.

Little wonder then, that the very air was laden with suspicion, passing the boundary of suspicion and merging into open hate and violence.

As I reflected on the character of the duty I had been assigned to, I was conscious of a feeling of delight, and firmly resolved that nothing would prevent the successful termination of my mission, for I loved Napoleon, and he, Napoleon, trusted me.

As we entered the yard of the inn we noticed a number of horses tied to the rack, several whose trappings showed them to belong to officers, but mostly the mounts of troopers, who, being on furlough, were enjoying to the fullest extent their leave of absence from the stern duties of camp life. As we dismounted we could hear their voices raised in argument or laughter, but all noise ceased as some one began to sing:

A soldier's life is one of glory,
• A soldier's deed will live in story,
A soldier bold, a soldier free,
A soldier's life is the life for me.

Then here's to the soldier,
Whose glories never fade,
Here's to the soldier
Who comes to his country's aid;

Fighting, fighting, with colors flying high,
Our heart's delight is in the fight,
Our business is to die,
Our business is to die, our business is to die,
Our heart's delight is in the fight,
Our business is to die.

And when we hear the bugle call,
The shot and shell around us fall,
No human tongue the joy can tell,
That in the soldier's heart does dwell.

Then here's to the soldier, etc.

The chorus was sung by all present and was repeated several times at the request of the proprietor, who, doing a fine business, was intent on stimulating anything for trade.

We had secured a seat at a vacant table, and ordered a bottle of wine, which the landlord was holding in his hand when he approached us. As he passed an adjoining table, he was accosted by one of the officers seated there.

"Landlord, bring that bottle here," he commanded.

"But, sir, these gentlemen have already paid for this," was the reply, as the landlord indicated our party. With an oath the officer jumped to his feet, and grasping the hilt of his sword, glared angrily.

"Do you dare disobey me"? he demanded.

"Yes sir," firmly replied the landlord, as he passed to our table. "I am not without influence at headquarters, and if you try to provoke any trouble here, I will find a way to reach your General."

"That to me"? he cried, as he made a dash at the landlord.

Jean, who sat nearest that corner of the table extended his foot, tripping him, and his head striking the floor

heavily. For a moment it stunned him. His friends, having made no move toward us, we proceeded to drink our wine, which we accomplished just as he regained his feet, and started toward us.

But at that instant Sergeant Pellitier sprang to his feet, and with a movement, too quick for description, grasped the offender by the coat collar, and the seat of the trousers, and throwing him across the table, proceeded to administer to him much in the style an angry parent would, to an offending child.

I at once interfered, for well I knew that the victim would remain a bitter and revengeful enemy, who would leave no stone unturned to be avenged for the ignomy now thrust upon him.

Nor was this all, several of the officers present began to move toward us, apparently inclined to resent this treatment to one of their number, such insubordination as we had shown was insufferable to them.

In a moment we were surrounded by about a score of troopers, who were determined to protect us from the vengeance of the angry officers, and as all had indulged in sundry bottles of wine, it looked as if a free fight would be one of the incidents of the day, and one not at all to our advantage, however, we were fortunate again for just when things were about to happen, the door was thrown open by an Aide of General Davoust, who entered the room, and in a loud voice, began to read an order for all officers and men now present to report at once to quarters. This intervention, for the time being, prevented trouble, which as it afterward proved was to our disadvantage, for after having given the order, he turned and went out, the rest of those present hurried into the yard, mounted and rode away.

We were in good humor over the incident, and were riding merrily along, when I glanced back over my shoulder, and saw that we were followed by three horsemen who kept at about the same distance during the afternoon.

We had decided to stay at the home of Lieutenant Montessor that night. For I confess I was anxious to see Marie, although less than a week had passed, since that painful scene in the garden, still it was on our way, and aside from that, I wanted to tell her of her brother. At least I told the Doctor so, as he was in the habit of demanding a reason for most everything I did.

How my heart fluttered as we entered the yard. My eyes were strained to catch a glimpse of her, and it was not until our horses stopped at the rack, that I noticed the Doctor leading my horse by the bridle line, which he had secured as we approached.

"You see Roul, I'm not for trusting you hereabouts, for you learned a trick the last time you were here, that I feel it to be my bounden duty to prevent your repeating."

"The Sergeant might send you to announce our arrival at the house," he continued, "and here come two of the gentlemen who followed us from the tavern. I wonder where the other one went, when we heft them at the cross-roads."

"Find that out if you can, Doctor, while I make arrangements for our accommodation. But mind, no quarreling here."

I went toward the porch, where I could distinguish the figure of Marie, although none of our party had been recognized owing to the gathering darkness.

"Your pardon," I began, but stopped as Marie advanced with outstretched hand.

"Roul, Roul," she exclaimed, "I am glad to see you again, come inside—I have so many things to tell you."

"There's five of us here," I replied, "can you take care of us all tonight?"

She did not answer for a few seconds, then slowly, "Yes, but I am glad there are no more of them for two will have to sleep in the servants' quarters."

We entered the house, and Marie after giving directions regarding our party, turned to me.

"Colonel, I received a long letter from my brother, in which he details your great kindness to him, also your good luck and promotion. I am glad to see you and thank you, you are the best friend we have ever known."

"O stop, Marie," I exclaimed. "Do you not see that I am still your debtor, that to you I owe my return to health, without health my promotion would never have been attained. You have caused me to see life in a different light than ever before."

"But why this Masquerade"? she inquired, "why are you not dressed in your proper regimentals"?

"We are detailed for special duty," I answered.

"That being the case, I will tell the servants not to recognize you in the presence of any one else," and she hurried away, just as one of the officers who had followed us entered the room. I at once saluted him, but he did not recognize the salute, instead he angrily demanded:

"What are you doing here, sir"?

"Myself and companions have been detailed to escort some wounded men from Roecroi, to the hospital for medical treatment," I answered.

"But I mean in this house."

"I have just secured accommodations for our party." At this instant Marie entered the room, and approaching him, held out her hand.

"How do you do, Pierrie," she inquired.

In an instant he was pressing his lips to her hand, and it was only by a violent effort, that I restrained the impulse to strangle him where he stood, for I now recognized Pierrie St. Armand, the accepted suitor of Marie. Something about him recalled someone I knew, and I was vainly puzzling myself regarding the likeness when Marie accosted me.

"Roul," she said, "I want you to meet Captain St. Armand."

I at once came to attention, and he graciously acknowledged my salute. Then glancing at Marie, he inquired:

"Myself and companions are on our way with dispatches, can you accommodate us with supper, bed and breakfast?"

"The supper and breakfast, yes, but I am unable to supply the bed, Roul and his friends have already secured every bed in the house that can be spared."

"It has come to a pretty pass," he exclaimed, "when officers of the line, must give place to warrant officers and privates."

"They are my friends," she retorted, "and as such you must recognize them, while they remain here."

With a shrug of his shoulders, he turned away, and I resolved that at the very first opportunity, that shrug would furnish me an excuse to call him out.

Marie left the room to order our supper, and I was about to go outside, and invite the others to come in, when St.'Armand stepped in front of me.

"Sir," he began, "you and your companions will leave this house immediately, or be prepared to suffer the consequences."

"And if we do not"?

"Then you will force us to punish you for insubordination, and as you know, that would not be pleasant."

"Pardon me, Captain, I had for a moment indulged the hope, that, you, perhaps, would waive the difference in our rank, but that would be too great a sacrifice." I said this with a glance at my sword, so that he would make no mistake in my meaning.

"Why, too great a sacrifice," he demanded.

"Because, you are perfectly safe, and no one can call you a coward, if you do not choose to fight. However, I regret, deeply regret that difference, it protects you, for a private may not question the motives of an officer and a gentleman. I presume you are both."

"Sir," he exclaimed, "you are safe here, and you know it, and for that reason, you are bold."

"Allow me to suggest, that I leave here early in the

morning, and that there are many places within a few miles of here, which are really romantic, and beautifully situated."

"So be it then," he replied, as Marie re-entered the room to announce the meal. She glanced quickly at us both, then led the way to the dining room, where we found the others already seated.

I was very hungry, at the same time, very happy, and mentally contrasted the high spirits of my companions, with the gloomy spirit shown by St.'Armand and his party.

Supper over, I excused myself, and went to the garden, hoping that Marie would find an opportunity to meet me there, but as the minutes passed, and she did not appear, I became jealous, in fact so much so, that I was furious and had started toward the house for the fifth or sixth time, when two persons entered the summer house, behind which, I, at that moment stood. I was about to make my presence known, when I heard St.'Armand begin to speak, and after the first sentence, curiosity got the best of me.

"Marie," he said, "again I ask you to send those soldiers about their business, and make room for my friends and myself, for I expect another here in a short time, who was detained on the way."

"I refuse to do so. Had you arrived first, you would have had the places assigned to them."

"Yet, you would have made room for the big brute you seem so interested in." He said this in a sneering, insinuating way, and my fingers closed on the hilt of my sword, as he continued.

"Perhaps, he is more than a friend, perhaps I have been mistaken, and should not have trusted to the fidelity of a mere woman, when such gallant chevillers are allowed to run at large."

"You forget yourself, Captain."

"Perhaps I do, but as your fiancée, I have a right to demand this."

"Then, sir, your right ceases here and now. Go, leave my house this instant, you miserable coward. To think that you would dare to say such things to me."

"Marie," he began, but she interrupted him.

"Go, sir. You have no right here now."

"But, Marie," he pleaded, "it was our fathers wish to see us united."

"And because of that wish, I agreed to marry you, but only because my dying father urged it, for well you know I have never loved you. I have often told you so."

"But your estate, what will become of your brother. Think what it will mean to him, every foot of this land is mortgaged to me."

"Her brother speaks for himself," broke in another voice, "and also bids you go; leave this place at once, as yet I am master here"?

It was Albert Montressor, who had arrived unexpectedly, and, seeking his sister, had overheard some of the conversation.

"O, indeed, then you, too, approve of such conduct. but you will both regret that you ever played with my affections, for by all that's holy, I mean to ruin you both."

For answer, Montressor deliberately threw his heavy army cap in St.'Armand's face, and as if by one movement, both men drew their swords.

I could only admire the splendid courage of Albert Montressor, who, knowing the weakness of his sight, thus defied a powerful man like St.'Armand, who was now preparing to begin the attack. Their swords flashed in air for a second before they met, but short as the time had been, my own weapon arose underneath and threw them apart.

"Your pardon, gentleman, but Captain St.'Armand has a previous engagement with me, which I insist on his fulfilling before he tries another."

"Captain St.'Armand, did you so far forget yourself," I asked reproachfully. "You should not take such chances as these. Why, sir, I rely on you implicitly."

"Have no fear you hound, you will not be disappointed, but I insist that you stop meddling with my affairs."

"Now you honor me, and I grant you every wish you could desire, as long as you do nothing that might prevent our meeting. It would be a bitter disappointment to me, if any other person than myself stood before you, when you say good-by to life."

"I will not disappoint you. We will surely meet, perhaps sooner than you desire. In the meantime, I bid you all good-night."

He turned and left us standing there, and I watched him until satisfied that he had gone directly to the stable. Then turning to Albert I took the hand he extended to me.

"Albert, I am greatly in debt to your sister. It was she who nursed me here, during the time when recovering from serious injuries, I confess. I have no rank or station in life, save such as I can make with my sword, but I love her, with a devotion, that will remain unchanged. And to you, as the head of her house, I appeal for permission to win and wed her."

"And what does my sister say," he inquired. "You know I value a true man more than anything else. What do you say, Marie."

I turned toward her, and held out my hands; for a moment she seemed to hesitate, then came toward me, and then threw her arms around my neck, then began to cry."

And I was happy then. Strange that a woman always resorts to tears to express her sentiments, be they of joy or regret, but how delightful I found the duty now imposed on me, so I wiped her tears away, in a manner I had never thought possible for me.

I turned to speak to Albert, but he was gone, and we were alone, alone. For the first time in my life I was alone with a woman, but I loved her, and was not afraid, so I kissed her tears away in a manner I had

never thought possible for me. I may be pardoned for holding her so closely pressed to my heart, and for the few sly kisses I stole. I may have been very awkward, for I confess, I had very little experience with women.

I have no recollection of what we said during the next hour or two, or for that matter, how long we had been together, but I felt a feeling of great disgust with the Doctor and Albert when I heard their voices in conversation as they approached.

"Sure, Roul, and it's a traitor you are. After all the good things this young female did for you here. You are trying to inflict her with your presence for the rest of her natural life, and mind you now, I am not saying that the infliction will be unbearable, but I just want to warn her that she has won the best soldier I ever knew, and to compliment you, for this infrequent exhibition, of good commonsense. And good luck to you both, you sly rogue, that you are."

Then he shook hands with us both, taking great pains to poke his finger in my ribs, almost provoking me.

"And now, Roul, after all is said and done, can you come out of the Heavens for a minute, and put a little common sense into action. Of course, you don't know that St.'Armand mounted and rode away, but as he left his companion here, I became suspicious, so sent Pellitier to watch him. Pellitier had no trouble in keeping up with the Captain's horse, and so he was a witness to a meeting between the Captain and several others, about two miles from here. He worked his way close enough to hear what they were talking about, and stayed long enough to be sure that they were in sympathy with the royalists, and intend to do us mischief, then he hurried back here. Perhaps it would be as well if you had a talk with Pellitier. Albert and myself will stay here with your lady fair until you return.

As he said this, he pushed me out of the door, and I hurried in the direction of the stable, where I found Pellitier talking to his horse.

"You overheard what they said," I inquired.

He answered in the affirmative, both by sign and word.

"Tell me all you heard and seen, omit nothing."

"There is a party of seven, who are to hide in the orchard about two miles from here. When we arrive at the crossing, Captain St.'Armand is to meet us, and demand satisfaction for the insult you gave him tonight. But he will insist that only two of us enter the orchard to fight. His party will then take us by surprise, and by force of numbers, make us prisoners, then seek out the rest of our divided party, and secure them, after which, they will deliver us to the Prussians, who are in sympathy with the Royalist party in France.

"A very pretty plot, too," I remarked. "But they don't know that we are ready for them."

"Colonel, if they succeed, we will be shot as spies, if not killed at once when they make the attack, which they think the most likely. They will not use any firearms, fearing to draw the attention of our forces stationed near here, but will depend entirely on the sword, and their numbers, feeling sure that there can be but one result, our total destruction."

I had been watching a large feed rack, about ten feet from where we were standing, and by the uncertain light of the moon, I fancied I could see something moving. I whispered my suspicions to Pellitier, and we began to move in that direction, slowly, and carelessly talking to disarm any suspicion of the person I felt sure was hidden there.

"Leave it to me, Colonel. I feel lucky tonight."

"To you belongs the honor," I replied. As Pellitier, with a swift movement of the hands brushed away the hay, lightly strewn over the figure of Lieutenant Reimier, and exposed him to our sight, cursing loudly, he arose, and stood before us, sword in hand.

"I am your superior officer," he began, 'and command

you to go at once to quarters, and report yourselves under arrest. It only needed the evidence I have secured to disgrace and humiliate you."

Pellitier at once began the attack, which for shortness and lightning like rapidity, was very gratifying to me. In a short time we had dug a grave, and all that was mortal of Lieutenant Reimier was hid from the sight of man forever, the Major and Jean having been called to assist us in the labor, as a pick and shovel was not to my liking.

Albert, Marie and myself held a consultation, and decided that Albert was to continue his journey to Bolougne, and I to Paris, and there to decide where we would live after our wedding, which we decided should take place in three or four months. How my heart throbbed, as I laid my head upon my pillow. Was I not the happiest man on earth, who ever had such good luck before. No one. I was sure of it. Happy and contented at last I fell asleep, thinking, dreaming, only of Marie, my Marie.

CHAPTER VII.

Day was just breaking as we rode away, but early as it was, we had eaten a hearty breakfast, and Marie had contrived it so that we had a few moments alone. The bliss of those moments seemed to linger with me yet, and little did I care if the whole Prussian army was waiting on the road to receive us. Nothing was said by any of our party, as we had laid all our plans the night before, so we rode on into the morning light, and in a short time, we saw Captain St.'Armand, who stood beside his horse awaiting our approach.

"Look at the black rascal," exclaimed the Doctor, "sure the devil will never shake hands with his own as long as that man remains on earth."

We were still laughing at the funny way the Doctor said this, when St.'Armand saluted us.

"Sir, trooper, if you still desire to meet me, if you still think I could, or did insult you, if you are as brave today, as you acted last night, if you are really in earnest, I have decided to waive my rank and give you satisfaction."

"You honor me," I answered as I dismounted, my companions remaining seated on their horses. I saw him glance along the road as if looking for some one.

"No need to look for Lieutenant Reimier," I said. "He was indiscreet enough to pick a quarrel with Corporal Pellitier, and so we buried him. Of course we regretted it very much, but he was so insistent, and I assure you he died bravely, and was not the victim of any cowardly plot."

The start he gave showed plainly that he had caught my meaning.

"That being the case," he said, "we will now have to bury you."

"A good receipt for cooking steak, is first get the steak, the steak, but where do we fight, for I suppose you don't intend to slaughter me here on the highway."

"There is a lovely spot over in the orchard yonder. Select one of your companions, and accompany me."

"Then we might as well ride the distance," I said, as I mounted my horse. St.'Armand did likewise, and with the Major I followed him among the trees.

The Doctor and Jean riding at a slight angle entered the orchard at an opening in the fence, while unperceived by St.'Armand. Pellitier followed to make sure that no rear attack was contemplated.

"What a lovely spot," I said, as I stopped my horse on a cart road that ran through the orchard, "I could ask no better place than this."

"We will fight in the little grove just across the hill there," said the Captain.

"Why not here"? demanded the Major, "there is no better spot on earth, and I have seen many affairs of this kind"

"My friend is beyond."

"Then call him," said the Major.

"There are two of them."

"Two or ten, bring them here," I replied.

St.'Armand touched his cap and rode away. I watched him as he topped the hill, and could not help smiling. We had chosen the ground and it was to our advantage. He was hardly out of sight, when Jean and the Doctor rode up, and hid behind a stable near by, while Pellitier also joined them, and in a few moments we saw St.'Armand with three followers, ride boldly back toward us, at the same time we detected several men, stealing quickly from tree to tree, but pretended not to notice them. They rode very slowly, and by several curious antics, tried to draw our attention to themselves. At last he stopped to dismount.

"Suppose we try this on horseback, Captain. It would be a decided novelty, to settle our trouble that way."

"No," he shouted, "we will not fight at all, for you are all under arrest, charged with the murder of Lieutenant Reimier. Surrender."

As he spoke his escort moved toward the Major, while he rode up and tried to seize my bridle line, at the same time, those of his men who had been stealing toward us, broke from cover, and came chargin toward us.

I backed Marcus away from St.'Armand, at the same time drawing my sword. The action now became general, for his men having at once assailed the Major and myself, to be in turn assailed by my friends, who had entered into the sport with as much abandon, as school-boys would play a game of crisscross. I noticed St.'Armand holding his lines in his left hand, so made a stroke at it, just as I felt a sting in my shoulder, then I saw the Major's horse stagger and fall. I had no time

to go to his assistance, for several men engaged my attention. Once again I charged at St.'Armand, and saw him reel. Then as I parried a cut from another, he turned and rode away. But they still outnumbered us more than two to one, and our situation was growing desperate. I had a slight cut on the face, and the blood was running down my back. I turned to look at the Doctor, who was opposed by two, while a third man was about to strike him from behind. With a touch of my knee, Marcus bounded against him, and he was trampled by my horse's feet, I turned toward my late adversaries, and saw them turn and engage a stranger, who had entered the fray, and was fighting with such fury that no one stood before him.

From then on the fight inclined in our favor. Seven of our foes were already down. When the stranger reeled on his horse and fell to earth, as he did so, one of our enemies, run his saber through his body, and that thrust was his last on earth, for with a well directed blow, Jean almost severed the man's head off.

I had noticed that all commands to them had been given in the Prussian language, and so we fought, for we were fighting for life. Left without a leader, as our enemies were, they soon grew tired of a strife that held no promise for them, so those who were yet able, turned and ran away, and we had no desire to stop them, for nearly all of us had wounds of some kind. Even then, I contrasted the great difference of men who fight for hire, and men who fight for life. They had left twelve of their number, dead and dying on the field, where they expected an easy victory.

The Doctor was already working over the Major, so I went to the assistance of the stranger, who was resting on hip and elbow. My heart filled with gratitude for his timely assistance, he did not seem to recognize me, but shouted his defiance:

"Vive La France. Vive Napoleon," he whispered.

I calmed him, as only a comrade can calm another in his dying moments. He knew me, too, and the tears I shed that day, were tears of heart-felt regret, for I could not help contrasting him now, with what he once was. I saw him trying to speak, but as his breath came slower, he scarcely uttered a sound. Thinking to comfort him, I took his hand in mine, and whispered in his ear: "Have no fear, dear friend, you will be reinstated in the hearts that love you. There is no stain on your memory now. I swear it."

I had heard, that a dying person could better understand a whisper, than words spoken in an ordinary tone, and was still whispering to him when the Doctor approached, and after a moment, took me away. Our friend was dead.

In a short time all our wounds were dressed. Jean and Pellitier had but slight wounds, I had several cuts. But the Major was the most hurt of all. The Doctor, as if protected by a charm, was unhurt. Yet it was necessary to reach the hospital, for the Major's sake, so we started back to camp, by a shorter road than the one we had come on.

It was late in the day when we arrived at camp, and while the Doctor was attending to the Major, Jean cared for the horses, and I hurriedly sought an interview with the Emperor, who listened to what I had to say with great satisfaction, for every once in a while he interrupted to ask a question.

"So Colonel, you believe that Captain St.'Armand is the person who has impersonated me"?

"Yes, Your Majesty, he is the right build, and so greatly resembles you that it would be easy for him to do so, and I have the word of a man who died gallantly fighting at my side, and he was not mistaken, he told the truth."

"And of this man"? he inquired.

"Your Excellency, his last words were Vive La France.

Vive Napoleon, and I assure Your Majesty, that his strong arm and utter disregard of death helped us to victory."

"There is no way to recompense the dead," he murmured, as if to himself, but loud enough for me to hear.

"Yes, Your Majesty, there is." He looked inquiringly at me. "If you will sign a paper, one that I will write, you will do a simple act of justice."

"Write the paper and let me see it; there is ink and paper on the stand."

It only took a short time to do this, and when I handed it to him he read it carefully, then re-read it, and took up a pen and signed it.

"For this day's work, accept my thanks, and remember that I do not forget the faithful, and I trust you to destroy this base conspiracy against me. You are still The Messenger of Napoleon. Now, sir, when will you deliver that paper?"

"If I may, I would like to deliver it at supper to-night."

"Be it so, I will see to it that all are present." Then offering me his hand, I kissed it and departed.

Happy, yes I was happy. Only a few days ago and I thought happiness forever denied me, but now as I thought of the great honor that had come to me, I was happier still. It was all for her, all for Marie.

"I hurried to my quarters, and sent an Orderly to summons the Doctor, Jean and Pellitier. My wounds were dressed in a few moments and we started for the Mess tent of the 12th. We could hear the hum of voices, as we drew near, for it was unusual that the Emperor himself, should desire the presence of every man.

They arose to their feet when we entered and crowded around us with a welcome that made my heart rejoice. Pushing my way to the table I motioned for silence.

"Men of the 12th," I began. "Once before I had occa-

sion to address you as I do now, but for a different purpose. This morning, in company of four friends, three of whom are present, the fourth is in the hospital, we were beset by several times our number of Prussians, and so well did they fight, that the battle was all to our disadvantage, when a stranger entered our numbers and fought with such bravery and skill, that I have never seen anything to equal, my only regret is, that he was killed during the engagement. I could have loved him as a brother had he lived, for he gave his life for one he could hardly entertain any kindly feeling for, thereby, showing the great nobility of his character. He died breathing the words, *Vive La France, Vive Napoleon.*"

A sob interrupted my speech, and I could hardly proceed, but regaining control of myself by a desperate effort, I looked around and saw the men of the 12th standing with tensed muscles, in breathless suspense awaiting for me to continue.

"We buried him where he fell, with all the honor we could give him. Men of the 12th, did we do right?"

"You did, you did, go on." These and other exclamations of approval greeted me.

"Then we carved his name on the apple tree in the orchard, and underneath it, the single line, *Soldier of France.*"

At this, several in my audience sobbed aloud, but calling them to order, I continued.

"I made my report to the Emperor himself, and from him received this special order, which I now read:

"Headquarters.

"Army of France. Special Order.

"Our attention having been called to the bravery and soldierly conduct of Captain Maurice D'Arcy, late of the 12th Hussars, who died in the discharge of his duty, we hereby direct that all army records be altered to conform with this Order, he being absent on special duty,

and further direct that the usual military honors be accorded him, that are due to a brave man and Officer of France.

"Signed,

"NAPOLEON I."

To say that the officers of the 12th were pleased, could not express it. In the delirium of their joy they hugged each other, then made a rush for my companions and myself, which was only checked by the entrance of Napoleon and his entire staff.

He advanced to the center of the tent, so as to lose none of the dramatic effect, and placing his hand inside the lapel of his coat, let his eyes wander among the faces of those present.

"We have always been proud of the 12th, and have had good cause to be proud of them, they have never failed to do their full duty. The rumor of your late trial has reached our ears, and we have sympathized with you, but we knew there must be something wrong, something we did not understand.

"We are proud to say to you gentlemen, that there is now no stain on the record of the 12th. It was washed away by the blood of a brave man. In fact there never was a stain, for the man was insane for the moment, and only recovered his reason in time to redeem the record with his life.

"Now, gentlemen, turning to his officers, who accompanied him, I have pleasure in introducing to you, a new General. Then he led me to Marshal Soult, and left me to be overwhelmed with congratulations, while he pinned the cross of Legion of Honor on the breast of my companions. I confess I was bewildered, and only recovered my reason when Napoleon commenced to speak again.

"We regret that the other who took part in this affair is not present, but a token of our approval will surely

reach him. Let this occasion be a proof that your Emperor does recognize true nobility of character, and will honor the grave of the soldier of France, who lies under the apple tree, on the road to Paris."

A burst of applause greeted this speech, which was continued until he signaled for silence. Again he addressed myself.

"Sir, when assigned to field duty, one of your regiments will be the 12th.

The cheers that greeted this announcement seemed to please him, for with a smile and bow, he left the tent. Left me to the mercy of my friends, who knew no mercy, for again I must tell the story of D'Arcy, and I may be pardoned if I dwelt upon the details, for the Emperor had said that the 12th, would be one of mine, and well did I know, that they would follow me through the door of death. Then I sought my quarters, marveling, that the downfall of one man should result in my rapid promotion, but well I knew the character of the man who conferred the honors, he might exalt me to-day and degrade me tomorrow. I had seen one soldier fall and another step into his place too often to be mislead into any vain glorious exaltation of myself, but that night as I sank wearily to sleep, I was conscious of a vision, of the grave and the apple tree above it, on which I had carved the single line, Maurice D'Arcy, Soldier of France.

CHAPTER VIII.

The sun was shining brightly when I awoke next morning, and the air was laden with perfume of the early blossoms. From a tree near by, I could hear the song of the birds as they sung a welcome to that lovely day.

The fever from my wounds, especially the one on the thigh, was decidedly painful, but aside from that I was feeling well. The excitement of the day before was gone, and for a moment or two, I regretted the rashness that led me to enter an ambush, which I knew had been already prepared for my destruction, but as I thought it over, I felt that fierce joy that comes to a soldier when he has won against odds, and has been fittingly recognized by his superior.

I was sitting on my bed trying to pull my trousers on, and about to give up and go back to bed, when Murphy came to the door, and with mock seriousness, inquired:

"May I enter the presence of the General?"

"Come hither little busy bee, I fear I need you."

"What is the matter Roul"? he anxiously inquired.

"This leg of mine, is inclined to be troublesome."

"Well, well," he exclaimed, as he began to examine it, "for a little cut like that, do you mean to say that you need a rest. Perhaps you would like to go to a certain country residence I know of, where a little brown eyed fairy feeds fallen soldiers with her own two pretty hands, and nurses them back to life, and love, and"—then he dodged a pillow I threw at his head, and as I was busy trying to get one of my boots, he said:

"Now lie down and let me dress it. Behave yourself man, and I'll say no more."

As he finished the operation, my servant entered with my breakfast, and the Doctor began to talk. The dressing he had put on my cuts so softened the pain that I scarcely minded them.

"Roul, we got off lucky yesterday. My scratches don't count. Yours will be well inside of a week. The Major is not as badly hurt as we thought he was. It was the fall that did him the most injury, and I am ashamed to say that it will be impossible for me to keep him in bed for more than a week. Good morning, General, come right in." This to General Lascelles, who came directly to me.

"Roul, my dear boy, I knew it was coming to you, but it came sooner than I expected, although not sooner than you deserve."

"Whist now General, don't spoil the boy. Mind me, I was telling him something like that a short time ago, and the blackguard was trying to throw one of his boots at me, so don't rile him General, for he has an ugly disposition, so he has."

"How long do you think he will be inactive?"

"Well if it was anyone else, about ten days, but Roul, man, you can never depend on him at all, and I am thinking that he will be out and around in about two hours, if we don't strap him in his little bed."

"General, do you know anything about the family of Captain St.'Armand"? I asked this question as he was preparing to leave.

"Yes, and no," he replied. "At least nothing of interest to anyone." Then as I nodded my head he continued: "The St.'Armand's are of the old peerage of France. We have known for a long time that the father is in sympathy with the Bourbons, but the son is one of us, and we have never had any reason to doubt the loyalty of the son, at least not until now, and already bulletins have been posted, offering a reward for his arrest. That is all I know about him, but I imagine you will be able to tell me more than that shortly.

"Now I must leave you Roul, as the Emperor is awaiting my return with news of you. He is greatly interested in you, and bids me tell you, to make no move until you have fully recovered, so be sure you are ready before you start again, for you have already been selected as a foe by one of the strongest Royalist societies in France, and one of the most unscrupulous too." With this caution he left me.

The Doctor filled our pipes, lit his own and handed one to me. It was impossible for me to leave my tent that day, so after enjoying a few puffs, I turned to the Doctor.

"Doctor, you have often promised to tell me your story, why not now? It will pass the time away, and may benefit us both."

"It's an old fool I am Roul, and seven years ago I would not have believed it, if anyone had told me what was to happen. He paused for an instant, and seemed lost in reflection, then began:

"I was in Ireland then, just a simple practitioner, always busy, but seldom with a penny in my pocket, for do you mind Roul, most of my patients were too poor to pay for a doctor, and those who could afford to pay, never thought it worth while, and this was exactly the case when I fell in love with a young English girl who was there on a visit. Its true I had no money, but my only sorrow was caused by the fact, that until I did have I could hardly hope to marry her. Lord, man, we built castles in the air. We built them high, but the time came when she had to return to England, and, loving her as I did, my heart was almost broken. But I resolved to make an extra effort to buy my sweetheart a token worthy of her acceptance, and for that purpose tried to collect some accounts long due me. There was a regular dragon by the name of McMurtie, Peter McMurtie, who owned a good deal of property there, who had the reputation of collecting every penny from his tenants, even if he sold the last stick of furniture they had to get it. Get it he would, by hook or crook.

"Now this McMurtie owed me for services rendered at odd times, a matter of one hundred and ten pounds, and not a penny had I ever been able to get from him, but now I resolved to get my money for I needed it, and therein hangs the tale, but that's another story.

"McMurtie had a fine healthy, good-looking daughter, about twenty years old, and I used to be very sweet to her, that is to say, she was about the only lady in the country I had ever taken out, and she was good company, lovely, lively and witty. But I had never felt

any inclination to make her my wife. We were just good friends, at least, that is the way I regarded her, and I never thought she cared any more for me than I did for her.

"Well, on this unlucky day, I called on McMurtie, and he invited me into the parlor, as was his custom, and it was there I told him that I needed the money, that I was thinking of taking a wife, and he thinking I meant his daughter, was all smiles. So he produced his check book, inquiring if the one hundred and ten pounds would be enough to carry me through, saying at the same time, 'Draw on me for as much as you need, for everything I have will go to Bridgey some day.'

"And a happy man he should be who wins her," I said. He looked at me as I said this, then inquired:

"Have you settled the matter with her, and when is the wedding to take place'?

"Now nothing was ever farther from my mind than to marry Bridgey McMurtie at that time, but it was mighty hard to make him understand that, and when at last he understood the true situation, he was in a passion. He swore by all the Saints on the calender he would kill me, ran like a madman for his gun, and I, not caring to do him any bodily harm, any more than I wanted to be shot, left the house in a hurry. Looking back I saw him getting read to fire, but I dropped to the ground, so he missed me.

"The next day as I was leaving the Post Office I met him face to face, and before I knew what happened, was knocked down by a blow from a walking stick. Again my good luck was with me, for the blow was a glancing one, and while it knocked me down, it did not stun me and I was up before he could reach me again. By this time I was thoroughly aroused, so catching the stick with my left hand, I struck him with all the strength of my right. It was a terrible blow in itself, but as he fell his head struck on a stone foundation, knocking him

senseless. He never recovered, but died in a few days. I was tried and acquitted, but during the time I was in prison, my English sweetheart, was married to another man and left for America.

"It was then I learned the value of a true woman's friendship, for almost every day until the trial was over, I had some proof of the friendship of Bridgey McMurtie for myself, and I had killed her father, true it was in self-defense, and I never meant to injure him, but still the finger of guilt seemed to point toward me. At last I was acquitted, and from that hour Bridgey kept out of my sight, and in a few days I heard that she had placed her affairs in the hands of an agent, and had left the country."

"I loved her Roul, but I never knew it until it was too late."

Here his voice broke and he wiped a tear from his eye. I arose and extended my hand to him. He held it for a moment, then pushed me down on the bed and continued:

"Well I was almost beside myself for a time, and as there seemed to be no future there for me, I came to France, and joined the army of Napoleon. I have been with him ever since, and I expect to die in his service. It was this thought of you and Marie, Roul, that made me long for the days departed, and the joys that might have been mine. I have never heard from Bridgey since she left Ireland, but every night of my life I pray for her, and perhaps some day I'll meet her, but what will that day bring to me? For as there is a God above us, her image is graven on my heart. But listen, Roul, how can I ever ask her to marry the man who killed her father?"

You have often asked me to tell you why I risked my life and limb in the service of a foreign country. Now you know all about it, that is, if you can picture to yourself the loss of social standing and a practice that never paid. Then, too, consider the allurements of an active life, the

honor of a soldier, good pay, plenty of excitement, new friends, and a desire to forget my troubles, and your oft-repeated question is answered.

"Here comes the rest of the big five," he continued, as we heard Jean reply to the challenge of the sentry. Looking out of the door, I saw the Major leaning on the arm of Pellitier, and in another moment they entered.

"Bad luck to you Major, did I not tell you to stay in bed for a whole day? And here you are paying about as much notice to me as you would to some old fish wife. Sit down, there now. I have a notion to send you to the hospital, and commit you to the mercy of that bunch of old maids, and take my word for it, I will do it, too; if you don't make up your mind to do as I tell you."

"So I will," replied the Major, "but how could you expect me to be quiet, and stay inside when I had this to show. "Here he tapped the cross of the Legion of Honor, and delightedly exclaimed, "Put there by Soult himself."

"I will admit that you have a good excuse, and ought to take all the chances you can, to prove your sanity. You old peacock, that you are, but if you die of disobedience, you can rest assured of the fact that we won't bury your cross with you."

I had decided on a new plan of action that made it necessary to understand and recognize each other in the presence of others, without being detected. So we spent the night and the rest of the day, perfecting a code of words and signals:

I thought it might be possible for us to penetrate the lines of the enemy, having learned how easy this might be done by the discovery of the fact, that the troops accompanying St.'Armand, were for the most part, Prussians, disguised in our uniform.

My own wounds were not serious, but those of the Major would confine him to his quarters for some time,

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So we decided that the four of us would make a start, and journey by easy stages to Paris on the following morning, the Major following when he was able to do so, so passed the last night of my active army life in the army of France.

CHAPTER IX.

On our arrival in Paris, we were greatly disappointed at our inability to discover the wagon in which we had sent our clothing, so we divided our forces, each going in a different direction, but the search proved fruitless. Perhaps the driver of the wagon had disposed of our belongings, and left for America, as so many of our deserters were doing.

We had succeeded in entering Paris, without causing that comment we would surely have caused, had we travelled as four officers of the line direct from the front. But it was different now. We needed our uniforms, for the better class of restaurants and saloons were closed to privates and warrant officers, at least they were given to understand that they were not welcome, no matter how freely they spent their money, for, as one proprietor remarked in my hearing, perhaps for my benefit, we must keep our grades. This made it necessary for us to secure the services of a tailor. We agreed that Jean and myself should rank as Captain's while the Doctor and Pellitier should wear the straps of Lieutenants. This arrangement, I fancied, would give us the greatest freedom, without any of the social obligations that would interfere with our purpose in Paris. We usually went out in pairs, changing companions, to avoid detection or recognition, although eating at the same hotel, we seldom took our meals together.

It so happened that Jean, and I, were sitting together at a table in the corner of the dining room, our two friends in another part, but nearer the entrance than we, when the door opened to admit two gentlemen and a lady. This in itself would occasion no surprise for the place was patronized by men and women of the better class, but both men were dressed in the uniform of the 10th, and were strangers to us. I looked in the direction of the Doctor, and saw that he too had discovered them.

"They are our uniforms, Captain," whispered Jean.

"I believe you are right," I answered, as I signalled to the doctor. "They are wearing them, to see if any one will betray the fact of former ownership, we must disappoint them."

Having drank a bottle of wine, which they did leisurely, the trio arose to go, at the same time Pellitier was saying goodby to the Doctor, and so managed it, that he stood aside for them to pass out first, being rewarded by a friendly smile from the lady, and a scowl from one of her attendants, and in a short time I crossed toward the door, to meet the Doctor, and together we followed the quarry.

"Now may the good saints save us from temptation, for I give you my solemn word, Roul, my hand was itching to lay hold of the rascals, and when you gave us that sign to be quiet, I felt like a pirate, so I did—here we have a chance for an old fashioned fight, and you spoil it by a wave of your hand, so you do, and it's not every day we have one like it either, and that's what riles me this blessed minute."

"If I make no mistake," I replied, "you will have plenty of chances to gratify your ambition. In fact, those clothes were worn today with the intention of provoking their owners, to disclose their identity, by picking a quarrel with them who wore the clothes. But under no circumstances must we let them know who we are. Time enough

for that when St.'Armand, or some other who knows us arrives here. In the meantime we must watch them, join them if we can, fight them if we must, but only when we are unabale to avoid it."

Jean, who had been following the trail left by Pellitier, now came to a halt, and we also began to look for a sign from our comrade, but in vain. He had disappeared. Puzzled, we retraced our steps and at the corner, about one hundred yards from the saloon and again picked up the trail left by Pellitier, but could not follow it any farther.

"I think," began Jean, "that one of us should return to the saloon, he may return, if he is not already there."

Acting on this suggestion we returned, but a single glance was enough to tell us he had not returned.

"Its a puzzle so it is, and its my bounden duty to find out where he went to," said the Doctor, as he started for the door.

I laid my hand on his arm, and drew him back into the corner of the saloon, just as one of the men returning entered the door. I was satisfied that in some manner they had succeeded in securing Pellitier, but did not believe that any harm had come to him, for our identity had not been discovered, I felt sure of this.

"Wait here ten minutes, Doctor, then if that man has not left this place, let Jean go as far as the corner. You stay to watch and follow the man, when he does go, both of you follow. But be careful don't pick a quarrel."

Then entering one of the private rooms, I was lucky enough to find a door, opening into an alley in the rear, so hurriedly making a few changes in my appearance, which I had already prepared for, I looked liked a villainous soldier, who was using his furlough, in an extended debauch, and having spent about all his money, was ready for anything to renew the supply.

On arriving at the corner where we had lost the trail

left by Pellitier, a hurried glance toward the saloon, showed Jean just leaving the door, and half way to the corner, was the man who wore my uniform. I also discovered something else, two Gen D'Armes were following Jean, the Doctor bringing up the rear. I smiled as I thought, what a curious game of fox and geese.

As Jean approached the corner, a hack which had been standing across the street drove up on signal from my double, at the same time the Gen. D'Armes approaching Jean, laid hands on him and informed him that he was under arrest. I was not prepared for what happened during the next few minutes, and I am sure that the Gen. D'Armes were even more surprised than I was, for with the quickness of lightning, Jean, seized one in each hand, and flung them into the street, at the same time my double drew his sword. As he did this I staggered and fell heavily against him, and, he staggering to maintain his feet, dropped his sword. By this time the Doctor had arrived, but a signal from me kept him from taking any part at this time.

"A crowd of curious men and boys had began to assemble, and in the confusion I signalled the Doctor to follow Jean in his retreat, and they were out of sight before our discomfitted antagonists had recovered, for in this party of the city the sympathy of the crowd was decidedly against the police.

"You fool," began my double, "why don't you keep sober? A drunken soldier with a sword on. We will place you under arrest, as a warning for you to remain sober in future." Suiting the action to his words, he seized me by the arm, and assisted by the Gen. D'Armes, pushed me into the carriage, and, taking their place at my side, we were driven away.

To say that I was amazed would hardly express my feelings. My lucky stumble had been taken as a sign of intoxication, and I did all I could to strengthen that impression. As the carriage rounded a corner, I lurched

heavily against one of the Gen. D'Armes, and as he pushed me savagely away, I playfully grasped his hat, and to my surprise, pulled hat, wig, and beard from off his head and face.

"You fool," he said, angrilly, "you will sweat for this."

"Keep your temper Beppe," said my double, "you look so delightfully charming in that disguise, no wonder the poor man took a fancy to you.

A laugh from the others greeted this speech, which I tried to join to the great amusement of my captors. I was sure that we were now going in the opposite direction than the one we should follow to the bastille, and that my Captors were not of the Gen. D'Armeire, and was glad when they assisted me to alight and descend the steps into a basement of a tenement house. As they withdrew their support, I fell heavily to the floor, but immediately sitting up, I looked gravely at them, and demanded:

"Is this the way you treat everyone you arrest"?

This must have pleased them for again they laughed at me, I too laughed, and in a manner added to their mirth.

"We have made a rare capture this time, and if he will join our forces, he should be able to get valuable information in places where we dare not go."

"No doubt of that," answered Beppe. "Give this kind a little money to buy liquor with, and he will do anything you tell him to do. But, he may not join us after all."

"In that case we loose nothing but a few moments time, the time it took to bring him here. See he is sleeping already, and we can expect nothing from him for a few hours at least."

Then leaving the basement, they locked the door and left me. It was evident to me that there was some conspiracy on foot, in which I was to be afforded the opportunity to play a part, not a prominent one, however, as

they did not seem to attach much importance to my kind. I heard them as they ascended the stairs, and started in the hall above, then with my pen knife, I picked the lock, which was an old one, and cautiously followed them.

I could hear the sound of voices at the rear of the hall, and moved carefully in that direction the door was closed, and although the sound was plainer than before, I could not distinguish what was said. I passed that door and tried the next, then blessed my good luck as I heard the street door close, I stepped inside, to find myself in a perfect arsenal, weapons hung all around the wall and were laying in piles upon the floor. This was fortunate for me if I needed any, for my own had been removed in the cellar.

I heard the newcomer enter the next room, and could then hear every word that was uttered, for the transom over the door connecting the rooms had been broken. Carefully I locked the door of the room for the key was inside, then cautiously settled myself near the door to listen.

"So you think you have one of them Emilie."

"Yes, we think so." It was a woman's voice replying to the question. "In fact we think we have located all four of them."

"Good, this will be great news to send the General, but better when we have them all. How did you get this one so easily?"

"After we separated at the saloon, I was walking slowly up the Avenue, when I discovered that one of the men who sat near us in the saloon was following me. So waiting until he came alongside, I fell. Of course, he assisted me to arise, and of course I was dazed by the fall, and let him hold me in his arms, while he called a carriage. Amada was following, and, of course, the cavileer motioned for him to advance. This he did, and

I asked my new friend to help me home. This he gallantly agreed to do. But what is the use of saying more, we had a glass of wine, and he is now peacefully sleeping in the little room up stairs."

"O you siren, what we are unable to do with rewards and honors you accomplish with a smile. You are the ablest ally we have, and your reward will be great in proportion."

"Did you discover the officer you were looking for?"

"No, and that is strange, too, for we are informed of every new arrival in the city. It must be as St. Armand says in his letter, that the troopers they tried to capture, are the men the uniforms belong to. However, we have not found any four men together in any of the cities, who answer the description."

"You should not look for them together, they would separate at once to avoid detection, and if their mission is of any importance, they would hardly appear in public so soon after the affair of the road."

"Then Emilie, you think we are loosing time looking for them?"

"No, not loosing time. We pick up some valuable ally every day, but I do not imagine we will have an easy time getting the best of five men, who fought and put to rout four times their number."

"What men fail to do with arms and numbers, you will do with a smile, for you are beautiful," he answered. "But tell me, have you secured the man you brought here?"

"I left that to Max, he can tell you about it."

Here another voice took up the conversation, but spoke so low that I was unable to hear the answer.

"Let us go and see if he is still sleeping, after that we will take a look at the gipsy in the basement, perhaps I might recognize them."

I did not believe that Pellitier was in any immediate danger, so concluded to let them make the first move in the game they had began and await results, for I was sure of my ability to checkmate them at any time. I heard them ascend a flight of stairs, before venturing out of the room, then hurried to the cellar, where I waited for them, but I forgot to lock the door, something that came very near causing me trouble, for the first words he said when he entered, was:

"I am sure I locked the door when I left here."

"I have noticed that this lock jars open at times," replied Emilie. "And have engaged workmen to make some alterations and repairs on the house, so after tomorrow, it will be perfectly safe. But you need not wait for that Beaudry, there is another and more secure place on the other side."

I made a mental note of the name, Beaudry. Somewhere I had heard it before, but I had no time to think of it then, for obeying a signal the Gen. D'Armes took me by the arms and raised me to a sitting posture, one of them administering several severe raps on the sole of my feet. I awoke, and, grasping him by the collar of the coat, shook him, at the same time rising to my feet.

"How did I get here"? I demanded.

"You were drunk, and we brought you here to sober you up. We did not take you to jail when we arrested you, because we may be able to use you. Are you a fighting man"?

"No sir," I said. "I am the most peaceable and quiet man in the city. Surely you are not going to accuse me of fighting."

Beaudry smiled, and laying his hand on my shoulder in a friendly manner, said pleasantly: "Not at all man, but you had an old sword strapped around you, and I thought that perhaps you had seen service and that perhaps, well, that you are on furlough. We need a brave man, one who values his own life at little, and

others at less. If you are not that kind of a man, you will not be of any use to us."

I was doing my part nicely, sobering up slowly, but at the same time noted the veiled question about being a deserter.

"Well, I am not a coward, but I would like to know what I am to do, before I get in too far. You see I have to report to the Prefect of Police every five days and am not anxious to offend him.

"Come up stairs with us, and we will explain just what we want you to do. There will be no danger to you, if you do as we desire."

I noticed the eyes of the woman were fixed on my face, as if she were trying to read my character, and when once seated in the room above, she took up the subject and demanded:

"Why are you compelled to report to the Police? Have you a criminal record?"

"No I have not, but they seem to think I should have. Yet I never did a thing to hurt anyone in my life, never took a sou that was not my own. But money has been lost at several places where I have stopped, and the police must prove some one guilty, but they could not prove that I took it."

"We will take your word for that," said Beaudry. "How would you like a good honest job? Nothing to do but dress well, eat well, go in good company, with money to spend, be a gentleman and keep sober? Remember the last is the most important, keep sober."

"That would be the hardest part of the job, but I will see the Padre at once, and take the pledge for a month."

A burst of laughter greeted this answer, and for want of something better to do I joined them.

"A whole month. My, but that is good. What say you to a year?"

As I did not answer this question at once, he continued:

"No half way about it. It would not be worth while to start for a month. Make it a year."

"Well," I answered slowly, "I agree to a year then, if you do as you promise, and I am not to incur the displeasure of the Police."

"On the contrary, you will be one of them, at times. I am a pretty good judge of a man, and I think you are the very one to take part in a difficult matter that confronts us. It is to our interest to work with the people who favor the restoration of the King, and the downfall of the Usurper. If we succeed, then, we will be rich and honored, but if we fail and are detected, then goodbye to our heads. It is only fair to tell you that."

"We are now in search of five men who escaped us about two weeks ago. We believe they are here, but so far, we have not been able to locate them. That shall be your part of the work, will you join us and undertake it, rather assist in this, for there are a number of others, looking for them."

"Why do you tell me this without first knowing who I am? Are you not afraid I might betray your confidence?"

"That I am not afraid is proven by the fact that I tell it to you. Once started on this mission, your life will be the pledge of your fidelity to us. Now you have your choice, join us or go to prison, or if you prefer it," here he tapped the hilt of a sword laying on the table, "fight me and be killed."

"But who are the men you want me to find? Are their lives in danger when found, and are they dangerous men to quarrel with?"

"That they are, brave and dangerous men. This will be no child's play, but your part is only to find them we will do the rest, for they will not be easily taken."

"I am not so sure of that," said Emilie, who had taken no part in our conversation before. "There may be other means far more effective than the sword, and I

positively refuse to be a party to their assassination. Honorable battle is one thing, but ambush is another."

Here she laughed, and showed the most beautiful set of teeth I had ever seen. And that laugh, low, musical and sweet, filled my mind for a moment to the exclusion of everything else.

"Go and keep your appointment, Beaudry, and let me talk to this man, he interests me, and I want to make a friend of him. You may leave Antone and Max in the hall until you return."

"You are right, Emilie. I did not notice how late it was." Here they held a short conversation near the door, but too low for me to hear, then as he made his exit, she turned and gazed at me for a second or two, and never in my life before had I felt such a sensation of bashfulness and confusion. I could feel the blood rushing to my face, and knew that I was at a great disadvantage, in this duel of the eye. With a quick gliding motion, she crossed the room, and, taking hold of the lapels of my coat, looked up at my eyes.

"Who are you, and what are you"? she demanded.

This was said in a manner that helped me to regain control of myself, the smile lurking around the corners of her mouth roused me. She was laughing at me, me, The Messenger of Napoleon, a plaything for a woman. This thought nerved me to reply:

"I hardly know how to answer you, but if you will permit me to say what I think, then I am one of the fortunate few who are permitted to gaze on the face of an angel, and your obedient servant."

How she did laugh then, one peal after another until the tears glistened in her eyes, and, I taking fresh courage, led her to a chair, and gently pushed her into it.

"Not so bad after all, or so clumsy either. I did not know, I never thought, you could say anything so nice as that."

"Nor can I. I assure you, I never meant to say it, that is, I did not know what I was saying, or, well," here I became confused. "Well, it just slipped out, but the inspiration of your eyes"—

"There you go again, another pretty speech, one would think that you were trained at the Tulleries. I believe you are not what you appear to be, and that Beaudry has made a mistake in bringing you here."

"A mistake for which I thank him." I paused to let this speech have proper effect, and saw that my words were not in vain. Then I continued: "You are right in saying that I am not what I seem to be, but wrong in this. I have never been at court in my life, nor have I ever attended a ball or reception, and you are the second woman I have spoken to in the last five years."

She gazed at me incredulously, and once again a smile flitted across her face.

"Indeed, you flatter me. How can you so far forget yourself as to put another before me. Why did you not say I was the only one"?

"I was tempted to say so, for as I look at you, I am not able to resist the impulse to please you."

"Then be sincere and join us in our endeavors to recall our King, and trust to his generosity for a sufficient reward."

"You are mistaken, Madamoselle, I crave nothing that the King could give. I am a simple countryman, unused to favors, and without fear, and perhaps, without ambition, but honest and true to my friends and their approval is sweeter to me, than the praises of someone I have never known, even if it were the King."

"You say that so nicely, that I believe you really mean it. But a King's favor is not a thing to despise."

"No more can it be depended on. Perhaps, a smile to-day, and a stroke tomorrow. I have heard strong men say that they were miserable in the presence of the King."

"But not our King. He is steadfast and true to those who love him, generous and kind to everyone, a sunny noble nature, a noble natural man, a ruler by the grace of God and the choice of his people, one who brings peace, not war, harmony, without discord, laughter, not tears, hope instead of horror, and joy instead of pain."

"You should also say, that he disdains the field, and the glory of the fight, that he trains his soldiers in the conquest of women, and to shirk the duties of men; that he cares little for the triumph of his army, as long as he is left in possession, and master of the court; that he would rather gaze into the eyes of some pretty school girl than conquer the world, say this, and you have told the reason why he is not King today."

"Be careful what you say sir, there are those who would kill you in an instant, if you utter such sentiments in their presence. You have offended me more than I can tell you. I see that we can never be friends, yet I wanted to win you, for I can see that beneath the rough drunken surface you have shown today, there is the foundation of a real man."

"You honor me, Madamoselle, and I confess to a feeling of real regret that we are unable to agree on this subject, but I trust we will both understand, and respect the motives of the other."

"There is one thing we can agree on," she said. "I think you will not refuse to join me in a glass of wine, a toast to those we love, and the glory of France."

Then crossing to a stand she returned with a small tray, on which were two glasses and a bottle of wine. And it was delicious wine, too, even I who am no judge of such things, could hardly fail to notice the excellence of the drink she gave me.

"Once again to our comrades in arms, your comrades, and mine, and may they conquer who are in the right."

I hesitated and did not hold out my glass at once. She noticed this and continued:

"Come surely you will not refuse to drink this toast, or are you afraid of a woman"?

"No, I am afraid of nothing but the wine itself. I have had proof lately that it is stronger than I am."

"Another glass will not harm you, so drink to the toast, May they conquer who are in the right."

I could not resist the manner in which this was said. The fire in her eyes seemed to hold my attention, and her smile so alluring, that yielding, I held out my glass, then set it on the tray which she carried to a table, smiling sweetly as she did so, and I was happy too, and a trifle drowsy, although it was hardly time to light the candles yet.

"What a gallant you would be, if you were to adopt that life, and how proud I would be to know that I had been instrumental in bringing you to a realization of the advantages we offer, to such as you are."

"I have little inclination for the life you describe in such glowing terms," I answered, "for my part I fail to see any great honor in going out to be killed, just because another man seeks advancement, and then, too," (here I yawned sleepily), "there comes the long weary marches, the trials and privations," (now my head drooped wearily), "of a soldier's life, you will excuse me, but for some reason, I am very sleepy. Very sleepy."

Looking at her, I thought her smile more enchanting, her eyes more beautiful than ever. Then as my head sank lower on my breast I tried to overcome my drowsiness, but in vain. I saw her as she gradually vanished from my enchanted vision, and in her place the well loved features of my own Marie. How pretty she was, but what a strange duality. My Marie was Emilie, yet she seemed prettier, gayer, truer, than she ever was, and it seemed that I had known her forever, an age before we were born. I could feel a something calling me back, back into the great unknown, and we

were side by side then, and I was happy, for we were contented, for there, our children were playing before us, and we were waiting for some great event, something they called the dawn of reason, we did not understand it, but gradually at first, faster as the light broke, it spread from hill top to hill top, across the valley and the plain. This must be primitive manhood, it was in the long ago. I seemed to say to her, you are mine, mine forever, and to place my hand in love and protection upon her brow. It was she who wove the cloth from which my garments were made, and I was happy then, but that was long ago, so very long ago. But, gradually at first, I began to mistrust her. This feeling grew until it amounted to a knowledge of positive guilt, then in a moment of madness I strangled her, strangled her with my own hands, saw the look of suffering on her face, as the sweat fell in huge drops from my forehead down upon her blackening face. Then I knew she was dead, my Em—Marie, my loved Marie, and I had killed her. I pity the man who suffers even in a horrid nightmare, such as now, no doubt possessed me. I pity the man who can feel such blackness in his despair, that no ray of light ever penetrates the darkness, ——— I tried to kill myself, but found myself without this power, and in my grief, I tried to hide away from that accusing voice, that told me every, every hour, every moment of my life, that I must, wander on, on through the ages of eternity, doing penance for the life I had taken, always on, on, and after many years, perhaps, that great ruling power, would, in pity, give me an opportunity to redeem myself, after many years, after many years. So I wandered on, day by day, listening to the voice of the winds, the sighing of the leaves, the murmur of the waters, and the cry of the birds, all seeming to say, after many years, years of remorse and despair, I might be permitted to repair the great wrong I had done, in the long ago.

But this, too, passed away, and again I was standing in the garden with my sweetheart, listening to her sweet words of love and hope as she laid her hand in mine. Then I saw her move to a grim old castle in the hills, and heard her sigh as she entered the room, which was locked, and barred her from the world. Try as I would I could not effect her release, although I could see her, tearfully pleading, as she held out her hands, "Roul, Roul. Save me."

How I struggled to go to her assistance, and at last something seemed to snap within me, and with a mighty spring, I bounded from the bed on which I had been laying, to find myself standing on the middle of the floor of a small room, dimly lighted by a skylight above my head. It was all a dream, a fearful horrid dream, caused by the wine, I had been drinking, or something else.

After a few moments I found that my clothes had been skilfully searched, and my sword taken from me. I tried the door, but it resisted my efforts. A search through my pockets, showed that they had left me my pipe, tobacco and matches. I was grateful for this, and so lit my pipe and sat down on the edge of the bed, to think over my strange experiences. Somehow, I wondered if Pellitier had been treated as I was, and if the wine had the same effect on him. Then I began to laugh, I hope it did, I hope it did, for then some one will believe me when I speak about it? And I would like to see the doctor have a little of the same stuff, he is so anxious to participate in all my experiences.

I now began to feel the *nasseau* that follows the use of the drug Emilie had prepared for me, and cursed myself for my simplicity. The glass had been prepared when she poured the wine into it. I did not know that this could be done, but I was destined to learn many things in Paris.

Gradually the room began to brighten, and I became aware that I had slept throughout the entire night, and

it was daylight. I had no fear for my safety, but was glad when the door opened, and Emilie, accompanied by Beaudry, and two others, entered.

"I regret the fact that we were unable to furnish you with better sleeping quarters," she began.

"Don't mention it, unless you include the wine, for I assure you it was abominable."

A burst of laughter greeted this speech, and I, too, laughed with them, rather than let them know how badly I felt.

"Are you hungry?" she inquired. "And what would you like to eat for breakfast?"

"Nothing unless you first made a solemn oath that it is not poisoned."

"Sir," exclaimed Beaudry. "We are not assassins, but patriots."

"O, and are the weapons of the patriot the poisoned bowl, and the cloak of a coward? You do well to shield yourself with an artful woman, who can accomplish by cunning, what your cowardice forbids you to undertake.

"Sacre," he exclaimed, as his hand flew to the hilt of his sword, at the same time the others drew their weapons. I had folded my arms, and stood looking him fairly in the eye, smiling as I always did when I was angry.

"There I knew you were cowards. See all three of you have drawn your weapons, to subdue a man whom you have delivered to you disarmed and helpless."

"Stop, put away your weapons," commanded Emilie. "This is not the time or place to fight. Beaudry, I am surprised. Sir, I had indulged the hope that you would join us. I am sorry that you have decided against us, and will now go and send you something to eat, and I pledge my word that it is pure, and well cocked, so eat and enjoy it. It may be your last good meal for many days, for we have decided that you are a spy, and dangerous to us."

"Your discernment is hardly equalled by your charms of person, Madamoselle. Were I a spy, I would be too shrewd to be caught, as you caught me, and if dangerous at all, you removed my sting, when you removed my sword."

The men had now left the room, and as she neared the door, she turned to look at me. I saw admiration in that look, but her words were low and fierce.

"You have degraded and insulted me, but again I pledge my word that the food is clean. Eat, for you will need the strength it gives you, and it may be long before you get another such meal."

The door had hardly closed on her retreating form, when I crossed to a fireplace, and seizing hold of the grate, gave it a vigorous jerk, and was delighted to find that I had pulled it from its fastening, with the use of very little strength, then using the end of the iron as a bar, or pick, it took me but a short time to pry loose several of the bricks behind the fireplace, and I had a good sized hole already made, when I heard someone approaching the door of my cell. A panel was slid, and a plate of food was passed through the opening, I being careful to stand before the opening in the door. And, indeed, it was a savory meal that Emilie had sent me, so I ate it to the last crumb, for I was hungry.

My attendant did not wait for the platter, so as soon as I had finished the meal, I began to work again, and in a few moments, had a hole large enough to crawl through, and was delighted to find myself in the arsenal, which I had visited yesterday, and standing in the corner by the chimney, my good old friend, my good old sword, the sword that had never failed me.

Carefully I opened the door, and was making my way to the stairway, when I heard voices ascending the stairs, so opening a door, I stepped inside the nearest room, and gently closed the door behind me, then turned toward the bed, then stopped and gazed in wonder at

Pellitier, who was laying on the bed, bound and gaged in such a way that it was impossible for him to move, or utter a sound. It was but the work of a second, to remove his bonds, but so great was his discomfort that he was unable to stand. We could hear the steps coming nearer, so I hurriedly crossed the floor, and crouched behind the door, not an instant too soon, for the door opened, and a man entered the room. He stopped in surprise, as his eyes beheld Pellitier, who was now working his arms and legs to restore circulation. Then he placed his finger to his lips as if to signal, and dropped to the floor insensible.

At first I thought I had killed him, and regretted striking him so hard, but as he soon showed signs of recovery, I tied him securely with the ropes that bound Pellitier. Then giving him a few hurried directions I left him to guard the prisoner, and to await my signal. I re-entered the arsenal and unlocked the door between it and the parlor, and was about to return to Pellitier, when I heard the voice of Emilie, speaking to some one as she ascended the stairs, so I remained in the arsenal until sure that they had entered the parlor, then approached the door again, to listen to what they said, for everything here had a great deal of fascination for me now. But I was not prepared for what I heard, and almost spoke aloud, a word of encouragement, for I admired the way Beaudry declared his love for Emilie, and asked her to become his wife.

"This is not the time or place to tell me this," she answered. "Wait until we have restored the King, then perhaps, not now."

"It is always the same story. Delay, eternal delay, yet you know I love you, and sometimes think you love me. Then again, I doubt it, and the doubt, almost drives me mad."

"My dear Beaudry, you should remember that all earthly wisdom is contained in two words, Wait and

Hope. Yet I have never given you cause to hope, but have repeatedly told you, that I do not love you, and that some day, if you wait patiently you will find some lady whose charms will prove to you, that the attraction you find in me is only a fleeting one, and would regret the rashness that caused us to cast our lives together."

"Never, never," he protested earnestly, as he seized her by the hands and crushed her to his breast. "I love you, I love you."

Emilie struggled to free herself from his grasp, but her strength was not equal to the task, striking him without avail.

"Let me go. I will complain of this to Count D'Artos. You shall suffer for this indignity, you beast," still struggling with all her might.

"Now MaBella, you shall kiss me to wipe out this insult, your servants are away, no one remains to help you, only two of my men are near, they obey me. You are powerless and alone. You are mine, mine I tell you," and with brutal strength he drew her to him.

As I jumped through the door, his hand was firmly pressed around her throat, and choked the scream she tried to utter. He was mad with the intensity of passion, and did not see me, until I tore him from his intended victim, and hurled him against the wall. Emilie recovering, as I raised her from the floor, gazed her astonishment, Beaudry, moved so as to stand between me and the door, and drawing his sword, stood ready for the attack.

"Be careful sir," said Emilie. "Do not fight him, he is an expert, a teacher of fencing, *Matre D'Armes* of the polytechnique. You are under no obligation to meet him."

I smiled at her as I drew my weapon, and turned to meet him.

"Your pardon Madamoselle, but with your permission, I shall enjoy this test of skill?"

I saw a look of fear pass over her face, and rightly guessed that she thought me unequal to Beaudry in fencing, so turning to him I saluted, and began to try him out.

"I hate to take advantage of you," he said, "so I shall content myself by cutting off your ears."

"A familiarity to which I object," I replied.

"Look out for my upper carte," he warned, as he made a lunge for my side.

This I guarded and hit him a powerful blow on the cheek with the flat of my sword. It was a stinging blow, and raised a large red welt. He began to lead more carefully after that, but his movements were as vigorous as ever. Again he made a lung for my side, and this time received another stinger on the other side of his face.

"You must be the devil," he gritted.

"No, I am fighting him now," was the answer.

"Why do you not kill me. You seem to be able to hit me as your will, it should be easy."

"I am trying to think of a way to do so, without leaving a stain on the uniform you wear, it belongs to me."

I heard, rather say felt, a door open somewhere, and knew by the expression on his face that he expected help.

"Pierrie, Max, Jean," he shouted, at the top of his voice, at the same time redoubling his efforts to reach me. I heard the sound of running feet, and then his friends jumped into the room, weapons in hand, then received the surprise of my life. For with a bound, Emilie reached the stand, and picking up a sword, sprang to meet the newcomers, engaging them, so that they could not reach me, then seeing her danger, I resolved to end the bout. I could tell she was an expert with the weapon, and was fighting hard. Her honor was the stake she fought for. Then I signalled for

Pellitier, and passed my sword through the shoulder of Beaudry at the same time, then as my friend entered the room, I turned to assist Emilie, but the others seeing how things had turned to their disadvantage, threw down their swords, and begged for quarter.

When I approached Beaudry, I was surprised, for seldom did I miss hitting the spot aimed at, but this time the blade had entered just above the heart, and he was dying. I regretted this miserable exhibition of my skill for it proved to me that I was out of practice, and I resolved that I would devote more time to remedy the defect. I had fought many duels, but never before had I killed a man, save on the field of battle, and I was considerably downcast at this result. Emilie, noticing my emotions, placed her hand on my arm, and, looking up in my face, said sweetly:

"You could not help killing him, Colonel. It was your life or his. He tried to take an unfair advantage of you by calling his friends. Believe me it is better so; remember how he was treating me, you were fighting for a woman's honor."

Pellitier also joined her in dispelling my feeling of depression, and in a short time we were talking like we were old friends and planning how best, to report the affair to the Police. She had heard me declare the ownership of the uniform on Beaudry, and now addressed me as Colonel.

"Now Colonel, you must leave this house, and let me explain this affair to the Police. I am able to do this and leave you free from any suspicion. Still I regret that your interest and sympathies prevent you from joining us, and from the bottom of my heart I thank you. Forgive me for the trick I played you, for after all it proved my salvation. You may never be my friend, but I will never consider you my enemy. Now go, and let me summon the Gen. D'Armes.

I offered her my hand which she took with the greatest

ease, and I was conscious of a lingering pressure I gave her, a pressure that sent the blood rushing to her fair face.

"I hope that I may meet you again," I said, "and that when we do meet, we meet as friends, for I have nothing against you. On the contrary, I admire your devotion to your friends and that which you conceive to be your duty."

I walked toward the door, but turned to take a last look at the place where Beaudry lay, and saw her sink on her knees at his side, the tears streaming from her eyes. I lifted her as tenderly as I could, and led her to a chair, and in a few moments she was wiping her eyes before a mirror, and removing the traces of her recent agitation, when Pellitier returned to see what detained me.

"Go now and leave me. I assure you I am equal to all this. Here she motioned around the room with her hand. It was only the outburst of feeling, after passing through such an ordeal.

I confess I knew but little of women, and the more I discovered, the less I seemed to know. Here was one who had conspired against me, yet had risked her life to defend me, and she was both young, and very beautiful.

CHAPTER X.

To my great delight, I learned that our friends had followed me, and they, knowing that we were in no immediate danger, wisely left us alone, to discover all we could about the house and its inmates. They were surprised to hear of the fight, and the scowl on the face of the Doctor was mirth, provoking, as he said:

"Now may the saints protect you Roul, and you, too, Pellitier. For it is my opinion that you both will be tried out in a manner you don't expect, and that, too, before long. But remember, we claim our rightful share of the good things, and no trifling about it, either. And listen, Roul, I am beginning to think that you are far too much of a ladies' man, what with one giving her life to you, and another one ready to die for you. You should stop now, and give the rest of us a chance."

Jean was dispatched that night with my report to the Emperor, and by a curious incidence, the Major arrived, now fully recovered. We were overjoyed to see our friend looking so well and strong, and eagerly questioned him regarding the war. He laughed merrily at the theft of our clothes, and when told of Beaudry's death, decided that we had collected payment in full. But for that matter, what was the life of any man in times like these.

"It was thus we passed the next ten days with very little of interest to us, although we had presented letters of introduction to several people of prominence.

I decided to seek an audience from the Empress, and so presented myself at the Tulleries. With only the epaulets of a Captain, I was received courteously by the Count D'Sayre, who had charge of the audience chamber. He took my card and retired; returning in a few moments he graciously asked me to excuse Her Majesty whom he said was indisposed, and begged me to call again, at a later time.

I returned to my hotel in rather a happy frame of mind, for I had seen many things of which I knew nothing, and thought that nothing could compare with the grandeur of what I had already seen.

On the following day I again presented myself for recognition, but as before, was denied admittance. Her Majesty being busy with a number of ladies who required her attention. So I wandered around the garden

for an hour or two, entranced by the magnificence of what I now beheld for the first time. At last becoming weary I selected a bench near one of the statues, and lighted my pipe to enjoy a comfortable smoke. I had not been there but a few moments when I noticed some one approaching me. It looked like Albert Montessor, but I could hardly believe it was he, so great was the transformation in his appearance. His eyes were bright and listening as he approached me, and the smile on his face reminded me of Marie, nor was there any lack of warmth in his greeting.

"Colonel, I have not the power to tell you how much I appreciate the message you gave me to Boulogne. I had no idea it was solely for the purpose of saving my sight, but I am very grateful for it."

How long would he go in this strain when I was so anxious to hear of other things, so I patted him on the shoulder, as I said:

"I know all you would say my dear boy, so leave something to my imagination, and tell me of Marie. For of course you went to see her before you came here."

"Indeed I did, the moment the doctor took the bandage from my eyes, for I was impatient to tell her the glorious truth. So we sat together, she and I, and talked over the bright prospects, and the happy days when she would be your wife."

I was flattered by this avowal, for well I knew the beauty of character of the girl who was some day to be my wife, so we talked for over an hour before we changed the subject.

"I have been detailed to assist the Engineers in making certain changes here," he said, "and have been looking for you for more than a week. I want the pleasure of presenting you to the Empress."

I told him of my attempts to see her, and could see by his looks that something was wrong, so I asked him what he thought about it, for he was well versed in court etiquette, even though much younger than myself.

"I hardly think that your card was ever presented to the Empress, but to make sure of this, I will return, and as I am a privileged person in the castle, will go at once to Her Majesty, the Empress, in exactly fifteen minutes, send in your card as if you had not called before today. If you are not admitted, then wait in the ante-rooms for me."

Promptly on time, I presented my card, and in a few moments it was returned with the information that Her Majesty would receive no more visitors today. I went over to a chair and sat down, once in a while raising my eyes as someone approached. Thus it was when the Count D'Sayre approached me.

"I regret that the Empress is indisposed, but she will receive no more callers today."

"You are mistaken my dear Count, I will receive this Officer."

She had entered from an ante-room behind me, and we had not been aware of her approach. The Count bowed gallantly, while I arose and saluted her. He looked so miserable that I pitied him. She surveyed us both for an instant before she continued:

"I understand, Captain, that you called to see me yesterday, and that you were refused admittance, also, that you were refused today Is this so"?

"Yes, Your Majesty. I did call yesterday, but I did not explain myself properly, and the Count was right in refusing to allow me to enter your presence, as I had no credentials with me. And being unaware of the rules of etiquette, I am sure that I was at fault again today, and I respectfully commend the Count for his care of your person. Had I presented this ring, I am sure the Count would have known I was the person I claimed to be, and as I now think it over, I am sure he did right, for His Majesty, the Emperor, has surrounded you with men like the count, on whose discretion and fidelity he can rely."

I could see that this speech pleased her, at the same time her eye was fastened on the ring I wore, the Emperor's ring. And the look of relief in the eye of the Count spoke a volume in itself.

"Captain, lend me your arm, and lead me to the reception room."

"Your Majesty forgets that I am not acquainted with the castle," I said, at the same time offering my arm.

"Indeed, Captain, I am pleased to meet you. How long have you been in Paris?"

"We have been here about five weeks, Your Majesty."

"We," she repeated interrogatively.

"Yes, Your Majesty, some friends accompany me."

"I see you wear our special signet ring. This assures me that you stand very high in the estimation of the Emperor, yet I have never known him to give it to any one but those of the highest rank."

"I have assumed this rank, Your Majesty, in order that I may better fulfill the duties that bring me here. I am an Officer in the service of Napoleon, but at the same time his messenger."

"Splendid, you must tell me what you think proper to tell, after I have introduced you to the ladies of the court. Lieutenant Montessor tells me you are affianced to his sister."

"Your Majesty, I have that honor, and I assure you that she is a lovely young woman."

"Yes, yes," she replied, smiling at my enthusiasm. "I have decided to appoint her as one of my maids, and to send her brother to bring her here at once."

The smile on her face caused me to blush like a school boy, and I resolved to be more guarded in future.

The ceremony of meeting so many ladies was somewhat of an ordeal to me, and I have not decided whether they laughed at what I said, or at myself, and was glad when the Empress led me to a private room, where we were followed by a maid.

"Now, sir, tell me what you have been doing since you arrived in Paris, and why you have not presented yourself before."

Then I told her about our start from the front, our fight, and the subsequent loss of our clothing, at which she laughed heartily. But when I told her of our last adventure, she was greatly excited, and asked many questions, some of which I was unable to answer, but when I mentioned the name of Beaudry as one of the conspirators, she arose in anger to her feet and exclaimed:

"The ungrateful hound. So, he too, needs watching."

"No, Your Majesty, we fought."

This answer seemed to relieve her mind, but yet I detected a note of sadness in her voice, that told me more than many words.

"Captain, I have been very kind to Colonel Beaudry, and often invited him here, so it grieves me to think that he would repay my kindness by becoming a traitor. Who was the lady? You have not yet told me her name."

"I am unable to tell her name, and if you will pardon me, I think it will help me to keep that a secret."

"By all means you shall do as you see fit in the matter, and remember Captain, that as the Emperor has placed great faith in you, I also trust you. Give these cards to your friends, if you see fit. I would be pleased to meet them. Of your fight on the way here I was already informed and am anxious to meet the other four. Are they all big and strong like you?"

"You shall judge for yourself, Your Highness. They will attend your levee tonight."

"Then come with them, and until that time you may be sure you have given me something to think about, and I may have something of importance to tell you."

With a smile and a nod she left me, and I passed out into the ante-chamber. As I did so, the Count D'Sayre

rushed forward to meet me, and with both hands extended, seized me in a grip that delighted me and cemented a friendship, that was to last all our life.

"Captain," he began, "you are every inch a man, and I rejoice to know you. Had you been revengeful it was in your power to injure me, but you generously overlooked the offense, and as a result, I am your friend for life. I thought I did my duty. We have so many who try to gain admittance here, that we must deny some."

"Say no more Count. I know that you were doing your duty to the best of your ability, and no man can excell you in that. So I, too, pledge you friendship as long as we remain true to the trust imposed upon us."

"An honest man can do nothing else than be true to those who trust him, and so my dear Captain, I hope that the Countess and myself will soon be favored with a visit from you and your friends. I insist that you stay with us now, and every time you come to Paris make the Chateau D'Sayre your home."

"I have four friends with me, and cannot leave them, but at a future time I will gladly accept your hospitality."

"Then bring them with you to dinner tomorrow, and after that, all stay and dance. Many of the best people in France will be there and many you should know of both parties. Can I depend on your attendance?"

"You can, my dear Count, and although I do not dance, never tried to in my life, I am coming fully prepared to enjoy myself."

I met Albert Montresor as I was leaving the palace, and he accompanied me to the hotel. I was very happy, too, for the things I had seen and heard were for the greater part new to me, and very instructive. I was overjoyed to learn that Albert had already received orders to go after Marie, and looked forward to the day of

her arrival with some impatience and a great deal of pride. It was quite difficult to avoid the thanks of Albert, who tried several times to thank me for my assistance to him, but finally I made him understand that any expression regarding the same was very distasteful to me.

The Major and Pellitier arrived at the hotel a few moments after ourselves, but it was almost time to start for the levee when the Doctor arrived. He was greatly excited, but refused to explain the cause to us then, saying that there would be plenty of time in the morning.

I pass over the first night in the palace of the Emperor, for the reason that no man on earth could fittingly described it, or the sensations that thrilled me as I gazed upon that fairy scene, but I made a mental resolve that one of the first things I would do in the morning, would be to secure the services of a dancing master.

The Count D'Sayre was here, there and everywhere during the evening, but found time to present me to the Countess, his wife, who was at that time one of the most beautiful women in France. For some reason I was deeply interested in her and watched her as she flitted in and out among the guests of the Empress. Yes, I was studying her, and could not help myself, try as I would. Her speech, her walk, her laugh, everything about her seemed to interest me, and I mentally told myself, that no matter when we met, I would recognize her, and that it would be impossible for her to disguise herself, so that I would fail in this.

I had about concluded to go to the hotel, for after all, when one does not dance, an affair of this kind grows tiresome, when I noticed the Countess approach a man, and slyly thrust a paper into his hand. The act was simple in itself, but so nicely executed that no one else seemed to notice it, and a few moments later I heard some one address him as the Count D'Artos.

I noticed the Empress watching this man, and at one time thought I saw her frown at him as she glanced in my direction. Then she looked at me earnestly for a few seconds, and having gained my attention, she again looked at D'Artos, then again at myself. I bowed my head as a signal that I understood just as a maid approached her, and whispered a few words, then both hurried away. Of one thing I was sure, the Empress distrusted D'Artos. She had signalled that fact to me.

"How are you enjoying yourself"? inquired D'Sayre.

"Like a school boy with a new top," I answered. "But now I must ask you to attend to the formalities of my departure for me, and I will retire."

As I laid on my bed that night I could not fall asleep. My mind was busy with the pleasant experiences of the last few hours, and somehow I had selected D'Artos as one of those who would bear watching. I also concluded to be careful in my dealings with the beautiful, fascinating, Countess D'Sayre.

CHAPTER XI.

It was after nine o'clock in the morning when I entered the dining room for breakfast. Pellitier had not come down yet, the Major had dined alone, and was out walking. The Doctor was waiting for me. I could tell at a glance that he was greatly excited about something and the very instant we were seated, he said earnestly, almost eagerly:

"Roul, my boy, I found her."

I did not reply to this, but smiled at the broadness of his statement, he seemed so terribly in earnest.

"And is it smiling you are, and me so beset with hopes and fears looking for a lost love. For the only women

I ever cared about, and doing my best to entertain a bullet from some enterprising foreigner that would end the search for me, and the devil the one of them ever cared to send me the relief I prayed for, although I made my will long ago, leaving everything I have on earth, to the man who had the good taste to end my troubles."

"But you found her, you say. Now tell me why you are so gloomy about it."

"Well, its because she hardly noticed me at all, and never even invited me to call on her, though I told her I would gladly give my life to recall the past. O, she was kind and sweet as ever, but never a sign or word of encouragement for me."

"Doctor, you have my sympathies. I know that you are bound to win her. It may take time, but win her you will, for though I have had very little experience with women, I have read that a faint heart never won one."

"Roul, you are a real friend, you inspire me with fresh hope. I am going now to look for her, to tell her like a man that I love her, so if you need me, send some one looking for me on the Rue DeHelder. I will come **back** as soon as I find her."

I could not help admiring his fine manly figure as he went toward the door, and the thought of my heart was in sympathy with him. Brave heart, may he win her love, he has suffered enough already to atone for all the suffering he ever caused.

Monsieur Le Captain, two ladies in the parlor desire to see you," said the waiter who attended me.

"Two ladies to see me." I repeated the words incredulously. I must have looked the surprise I felt, for he smiled, and said:

"You need not be afraid to see them sir, they are both young and very pretty."

I paid no attention to this remark, but went toward the parlor, wondering who they could be. Imagine my surprise when Emilie D'Mendon came to meet me, but

how changed. Sweet, shy, and almost timid. She saw the surprise still lingering on my face, and at once stated the object of her call.

"My friend, Madamoselle McMurtrie." Here we both accepted this statement as an introduction, and knowing her from the Doctor's description, I held out my hand, which she shook warmly, but the DeMendon was speaking again.

"My friend is in trouble, and I have been unable to advise her, but I thought of you, and knew that your experience with men would qualify you to give the advice of a brother, so I brought her to you."

"You honor me. Proceed. But first let me ask, is not this lady, the same who left Ireland, after her father's death, about six years ago?"

The look of surprise that appeared on the face of both the young women, was one that pleased me. I was gaining by my experience with women, and in this instance, I really enjoyed it. Emilie, recovering, continued to speak.

"It is about that death, and the man who caused it that we seek to consult you. I am sure that you are the man who will advise us best, and also, if you accept the position of adviser, you will see to it that no man living, will interfere with the happiness of my friend."

"You are right, I am glad you came to me, for if this man is not a real man, I will have him out." Here I tapped the hilt of my sword in a suggestive manner. I saw the face of the Irish girl turn deadly pale, and her fingers working convulsively.

"Not that," she exclaimed, "not that. I—I am no sure."

"My dear young lady, the man was innocent of your father's death. Had he intended to injure him at all, he would have done it on the first occasion, when your father shot at him. This man really did love you then but he did not know it. He loves you now, and he does

know it, for he is my best friend, and has told me so, not once but often, since he told me the story of his life."

A tear glistened in the eye of that young woman, and Emilie bent over her, gently stroking her hair and showing every evidence of sisterly devotion and sympathy, so I continued:

"He is the truest and best friend I have on earth, a man whose devotion and principles are beyond question, waiting, praying daily for the hour when he will meet the woman he loves. It is against every law of justice that the mistake of a moment, should be beyond pardon."

"But he killed her father," broke in Emilie.

"Had her father fallen over a baby's cart, the result might have been the same. It was the fall, not the blow that killed him. The Doctor only tried to protect himself, which is proved by the fact that he ran away, rather than stay and continue the fight, yet I know him to be one of the bravest men alive. I tell you Bridgey he loves you, and more, he is worthy of you."

"Good," exclaimed Emilie. "Now Bridgey, there should be no bar to your happiness. No need to lie awake and cry all night, tonight, but to sleep and dream of love and happiness."

I crossed the room, and taking her by the hands, drew her to me and petted her, (the DeMendon, looking on in approval), and so I saw the tears fall from her eyes, the tears that washed away every barrier to the happiness of my friend. But another experience was in store for me, one that I never expected, and hardly appreciated that morning, for the warm hearted impulsive Irish girl, put her arms around my neck, and taking an unfair advantage of me, kissed me fully on the lips. I must have looked something of what I felt, for I was recalled to myself, by a burst of laughter from Emilie.

I felt that I must do something or say something, to

escape the ambush I had fallen into, for a good soldier should be able to retreat as well as advance, so with my greatest dignity, I said:

"You will confer a great honor on me if you will take lunch with me. It is nearly noon now, and I want you to stay, just to hear what the Doctor tells me when he returns from the Rue DeHelder where he is looking for you.

They agreed to this, and to my delight, I caught a glimpse of the Doctor standing on the corner about a hundred steps away. So I sent a messenger after him, and led the ladies to my rooms. Seating them in the inner room. I left the door slightly ajar, so as to enable them to hear our conversation, and had just lit my pipe and assumed my best air of indifference to everything when he entered.

"You sent for me Roul, is there anything wrong?"

"No, I was anxious to know if you had learned anything since you left me."

"Devil a thing. Worse luck, Roul. I wonder if it was really Bridgey I spoke to yesterday, perhaps I never saw her at all, and it was only one of the delusions of some fever or sickness threatening me, but I have been thinking so much about her, sure I don't feel a bit like myself at all,"

"Nonsense man, there is nothing the matter with you. You saw her, and are disappointed this morning because you failed to find her. Let me get you a glass of wine."

Both the women were standing near the door when I entered the room, and as the Doctor's back was turned toward us, I left it wide open.

"Bridgey, Bridgey, " muttered the Doctor, "if you only knew how bitterly I regret the past, you would come to me and not keep me waiting for a glance of your pretty face. O my darling, my lost love, come to me."

This dramatic appeal was not lost on Emilie, for with

rare presence of mind, she pushed Bridgey into the room, and with slow noiseless step, she drew near him. Then he raised his eyes to look for me, and encountered Bridgey. His eyes seemed to burn in his face, he gulped several times, but uttered no sound. Then Bridgey, the impulsive, for a second time that morning, embraced and kissed a man. It was fully a moment before he recovered, but when he did, there was no lack of ardor in his language or action.

"And are you sure its yourself, darling. Maybe I am dreaming still, but if I am, I would rather die dreaming like this, than waken and be disappointed."

Looking at them as we were, I saw a tear drop from the Doctor's eye, and lose itself in her coal black hair. I thought that women alone had a right to shed tears but when I saw them drop from the eyes of a war-like man, I knew that they were silent monitors of the soul, and a relief to the overcharged heart of my friend.

Looking over her head he motioned for us to advance, for impelled by sympathy, more than curiosity, we had crossed the threshold of the room.

"Is it a scorcercer you are Roul?, or is it the lady at your side who is the enchanteress? Here I have been plunged in the very depths of misery, and as if by magic raised to the realms of bliss. O Bridgey, Bridgey, my heart's love, you don't know, and will never guess, how lonely I have been, but there is nothing to prevent us, (here he kissed her fondly), and tomorrow we will hunt up a respectable Padre, and tomorrow you will be my wife."

Bridgey began to protest against this, and with great discretion we withdrew, Emilie leading me toward the door. The last of the argument we heard, was an audible kiss smothering some objection. We staved away for more than an hour, and on our return we needed but a glance at the Doctor, to know that he had won, and the wedding would be the following day.

We had lunch together, then I started for the tulleries, where I at once made a confidant of D'Sayre.

"Fine, fine," he exclaimed, "you must tell the Empress of this as she takes great interest in such affairs, but first promise me that your friend will be married in my residence. I insist on that and that they begin their new life as my guests. No, do not protest, they have no relatives here, and this arrangement will afford us the greatest pleasure, and then the best accommodation to be had. I confess that I admire your friend, for all the world loves a lover, and some even, love the love, better than the lover. That settled I will now send a message to my steward, while you tell the story to the Empress."

"Captain, I must compliment you on the impression you made last night. What is your impression of the Count D'Artos, for I saw that you understood my signal."

"Your Majesty, I intend to watch him, and others who were present if you repeat your question in another week. I may be able to give you an intelligent answer."

"Good. We believe him to be a Royalist, and a clever one at that, but so far, he has done nothing that the police have been able to detect. I was greatly pleased and could see at a glance that nothing escaped the notice of some one of you; also, I was greatly amused by the Irishman you call Doctor, he seemed so absent minded yet so alert."

"Your Highness, the Doctor is to be married tomorrow, and of this I wish to tell you."

"O do tell me everything. Who is she? How long have they known each other? Tell me all about it, see how impatient I am?"

She was waving her hand toward me, and patting the floor with her foot, so I took this for signs of her impatience, and told her the story of the Doctor's love as I knew it.

"So the Count has already began his preparations, and planned to have them for his guests. I am glad that is so, but I will be present at the wedding. I must be as a sister to her. Never in all my life have I heard of another such case. Convey my compliments to them both."

"Your Majesty, to avoid publicity, we desire to keep the affair quiet. It might be inconvenient to attract too much attention to my assistant at this time."

"And I will assist you, but will be present as a friend of your friend's bride. Such a romance. I am sorry the Emperor is not here. Send D'Sayre to me as you pass out."

To say that the Doctor was pleased with the arrangements made by D'Sayre, would hardly express it, he was delighted, and he had reason to be, for it was the Empress herself who placed Bridgey's hand in that of the Doctor. Emilie, Countess DeMendon, was the witness for the bride, and I fear that I made very little impression as a groomsman, for I was illy at ease, and had but very little experience in such things.

The first to compliment them was the Empress, who clasped a string of pearls around the neck of the bride, and as she offered her hand to the Doctor, he said earnestly:

"I have just promised to live for one woman, but I am ready to die for you this blessed minute."

"You flatterer," was the pleased answer. "No wonder you were able to carry things with a high hand, and coax your wife to marry you with only a day's notice. Are all your countrymen alike?"

"As alike as two peas, Your Highness, only different in some things, in fact, in nearly everything."

CHAPTER XII.

So far I have said nothing of the soiree at the home of the Count on the evening before the wedding, because the wedding itself so completely overshadowed everything else, but will not return to that event, as several things happened that had a great bearing on our future movements.

Owing to their marriage, the Doctor and Bridgey did not attend the soiree, no doubt finding greater comfort in their own society than that of strangers. But the Major entered into the sport of the occasion with a will, and as he was a graceful and tireless dancer, he was a favorite with the ladies that night.

I was standing alone in a little room just off the dance hall, when the Count D'Artos stopped near the door, and a moment later he was joined by the Countess D'Sayre. The Count began to speak in a low tone of voice.

"Now my dear Countess, am I right"?

"You are Count, he is the man we have been looking for."

"And you have planned it so that you will be able to learn their secrets and make use of him"?

"That will take time, but you may be sure I will not stop at anything to make an ally of him."

"Good, I see him watching us now. Strange that we are not able to win your husband. He would be of inestimable value to us."

"I am positive that he will never entertain for a moment any suggestion like ours. I know he is loyal to

the Emperor and would denounce us. You know what that would mean, so be careful what you do or say. I must go now, as I dance with the charming Major next."

She hurried away, and for a moment D'Artos remained where she had left him. Then he, too, moved away. It was sometime before I ventured out of the room, but as neither of the two were in sight I was relieved, and began at once trying to discover the man they alluded to. The rest of the evening passed without incident, but I now knew two of the conspirators.

Life seemed very merry for the Doctor and his bride and they were very happy during the next ten days which passed without anything of special importance. Some wise man has truly said: "That all things come to him who waits," and so I waited patiently for the return of Albert Montessor and his sister, seeing very little of my companions, but knowing well that they were watching every move made by the suspected parties. Secure in that knowledge, and satisfied with the whole world, I was sitting on the porch, my chair tilted back, my feet resting on the railing, and my pipe in my mouth, and doing double duty, for I smoke hard when not busy. Glancing down the street I saw the Doctor coming. I was attracted by the way he walked and hurried to meet him. As he drew nearer I noticed that his arm was in a sling, and a look of pain on his face told of intense suffering. I took hold of the injured arm, and anxiously inquired:

"Doctor, what is the matter, you are wounded. How did it happen?"

"Devil a bit am I wounded. Just a scratch or two, but they amount to nothing."

We spoke of no more until we entered my room, where he tossed off a big glass of wine, before speaking.

"It's the Major, Roul. It's the Major, and to think of it, he was one of my best friends."

"What of the Major, what do you mean, Doctor"?

"Dead," was the answer.

"Dead," I repeated, the word in amazement. Seldom if ever had I received such a shock. "Dead, you must be joking Doctor."

"Sure I wish I was joking, Roul. Worse luck its true. And I killed him."

"You killed him."

"Yes Roul. I killed him. Ever since the night I was married I have noticed that he has been a frequent guest at the home of D'Sayres, and that the Countess was doing her best to entertain him, but I thought nothing of that, and all would have went well with him and her too for that matter. if they had not entered one of the summer houses about nine o'clock this morning. It so happened that I was standing directly behind it and they did not see me, and not wishing to intrude I did not make my presence known. I saw him take her in his arms and kiss her. How my blood boiled, for I could never think that a friend of mine would eat, drink and be merry, at the expense of another, and repay that kindness by seducing the wife of his host.

"I heard her beg him to join the Royalist party and assist them in the restoration of the King, promising him honor, position, and her love, that guilty love of a base designing woman, and he promised to do as she asked him and to tell her why we came here, but that was to happen at another meeting to be held this afternoon. Then they caressed each other like fools in a pantomime. I can't tell you all they said, but she left him promising to return with the General, as she called him, and with vows of eternal love, after the death of D'Sayre, which she predicted, when their day came.

"I saw her enter the house before I showed myself to him. You can imagine what happened. I called him a thief. He called me a spy, and we were at it. The

result is just as I told you Roul. He lies in the garden. I am slightly disfigured, but thank heaven my manly beauty is none the worse, to show my dear wife so soon after our wedding day."

I was so benumbed by the tragic story that I sat staring into space after the Doctor quit speaking. How much had the Major told the Countess? Who could be trusted when such men as he proved traitor.

"You might give me a glass of wine, Roul, for I confess to a shaky, canny, creeping feeling. Different from any that I have ever felt."

I hurried to pour him out the wine he asked for, at the same time taking a liberal drink myself, for I felt pretty much as he had described his feelings. The wine seemed to revive him for he continued:

"Another item for the papers.. The body of Major Pallisone found in the garden at the Chateau D'Sayre. The assassin was a skilled swordsman as is evidenced by the fact that the Major was hit in several places, any one of which might have proved fatal. The murderer escaped and the affair is shrouded in mystery, no clue being left for the Police to work on."

"Do you know if the body has been discovered yet?"

"No I don't. The villain that he was. False alike to friend and country. A double dyed traitor to that noble man. A fool who yielded to the witchery of a renegade woman. I might have let him escape with all that Roul, and trusted to providence to checkmate any harm he could do, but knowing that it might cost the life or liberty of the rest of us, I avenged the honor of my friend D'Sayre and killed him."

I saw that the Doctor was greatly excited, so crossed the room, and taking him by the hand, patted the head that was now shaking with emotion.

"You did the right thing, Doctor, my one regret is that it was not I who did, what you have done."

"There you go again, Roul. I never did see any one

so selfish as you are, begrudging me the little bit of excitement, when you have so much of it. Can't you be the least bit generous man"?

"Doctor I was thinking wholly of you and your wife. how will you explain it to her? What will you tell her"?

"Tell her. Why tell her that, but why tell her at all? Just say that it was the work of a madman, and you will be telling the truth."

"And what will you tell D'Sayre"?

"Tell him nothing man. No true man would tell another that his wife was false. It would not be the act of a friend, but of a fiend to repeat a tale that could do nobody any good, but would be sure to bring suffering and misery to a trusting heart."

I agreed with the Doctor, but felt that something must be done to avert suspicion, so had him lie down on my bed to await my return. Then I hurried to the home of D'Sayre, for as I had surmised the body had already been found, and was then in the hands of the coroner and the procurer De Roi.

Great excitement prevailed. D'Sayre had arrived and with the minister of police was closely questioning the servants. No one could be found who could give the least clue to the authorities. I saw the Countess and the Doctor's wife standing near the window when I entered the reception room, and bowing to both, addressed Madam Murphy.

"Your husband was suddenly called to the country and will be gone for several days. He left me about nine o'clock. In the meantime should you need anything, you have only to call on the Count or myself. The Doctor desires that you send him his small instrument case, which he left on the stand in his room. If you will give them to me I will see that they are delivered to him."

As the Doctor's wife hurried away, the thought oc-

curred to me that I had established an alibi for him, by saying that he was with me at nine o'clock, but this thought was interrupted by the Countess.

"This is a terrible affair, Captain, and one in which you lose a trusted friend."

"I regret that it is so," I replied, "but have you been questioned by the Police?"

The Countess turned deathly pale when I asked this question and clutched wildly at the curtains for support. I assisted her to a seat and poured out a glass of wine for her.

"Why do you ask that question?"

"Because I am sure that you know nothing, that you were not in the summer house this morning, you will adhere to that."

"I am in no way responsible for his death," she screamed, as D'Sayre and the Attorney entered the room.

"Be calm, Countess, you know nothing. Here comes the Officer."

"Captain, I am almost heart broken over this affair, to think that a man like the Major should be killed in my garden, under the very eye of the Police, seems beyond belief."

"I took his hand in mine, and all the power of friendship was expressed in the grip I gave him. I saw a look of joy light up his face, which seemed to grow ten years younger in an instant."

"I, too, regret it, but I am sure that you are in no way to blame; I have been trying to comfort the Countess, who is on the verge of a nervous collapse."

"Perhaps I should not worry her with my questions," began the Attorney.

"I have already questioned her, and she has assured me that she saw no one, and was not aware the Major had called this morning. You know he was my friend and I am greatly interested. Have you discovered anything?"

"Not a thing, the affair is shrouded with mystery. I am satisfied that I have done my duty here, and will leave the rest to the police." Then as the Count knelt by the side of his wife to comfort her, the Attorney hurried away.

The Doctor's wife returned, saying that she was unable to find the instruments. I knew that she told the truth, for every instrument he owned were safely stored in my rooms at the time. Had been since her wedding day.

"It may not matter if he does not get them, he was not sure that he would need them, and if he does he can borrow a set. Don't forget that the Count and myself are your bankers until the Doctor returns, and be careful of the Countess, she needs a friend."

I hurried to the Tulleries and in a short time was admitted to the presence of the Empress. She was greatly excited, having already heard of the affair.

"I have heard of the death of your comrade, and am so sorry that I can hardly express my feelings, to think that such an incident could happen in the broad open light of day, here in the capitol of the nation, is beyond belief."

"Your Majesty, it is sometimes better that such things do happen." She looked at me inquiringly. "I am about to dispatch a messenger to the Emperor with the report of the affair. If you have any message to send, I would be pleased to receive it in an hour."

"Then you will take a note from me. It will be ready at that time, and when you are free I want you to tell me all that you are reserving about the affair."

I was satisfied now that the police knew and suspected nothing regarding the real cause, for the affair was of such importance that the facts would be told to the Empress at once, so I wrote a full account to the Emperor, and having received the note from the Empress, dispatched Pellitier with it. The funeral of the

Major occurred the next day, and to avoid suspicion I was there as his next friend.

The Doctor's wounds were slight and improved so rapidly that in four days I was glad to let him return to his wife. Of course I had very little experience with women, but my head was nearly turned by the wonderful stories the Doctor told of Bridgey, the best little woman, the sweetest wife, the dearest girl, the prettiest little Angel, it was my wife this, and Bridgey that, until I knew that if I had to endure it much longer, well, no telling what might happen. So I sent him home to Bridgey, and got out my pipe for a real bit of enjoyment as he would call it. Then I began to wonder why Alberi and Marie had not arrived as yet. Was it possible that it took so long to arrange a wardrobe, of course, I could not judge, for my experience with women was very limited, in fact I did not understand them very well.

CHAPTER X.

The death of the Major seemed to stop several intrigues that I felt sure had been going on, and I was sitting alone in the hotel wondering how long before something would happen to bring a little zest to the inaction I now suffered, when a waiter approached with a letter, and having nothing else to do I opened it at once and was surprised at its contents. It had no heading, and no signature, the party who wrote it evidently trying thus to obliterate their identity.

Monsieur Le Captain:—

Captain St.'Armand has fully recovered from the wound you inflicted on him some three months ago, that is to say, that he lost three fingers of his left hand at that

time, but otherwise is the same sharp unscrupulous man that he ever was, and it will be to your advantage to keep advised about his movements. I warn you not to trust any stranger, never drink with any one you don't know and fully trust. Always go prepared to defend yourself, for you are too troublesome to some people, and your capture and imprisonment has been decided upon. Do not trust the Gen. D'Armeire, they may be your friend, but do not trust them, be careful at all times.

Your Friend.....

An attempt had been made to disguise the writing, but no enemy would take such pains, so I concluded to talk it over with the Doctor and for that purpose started for the Chateau D'Sayre. I felt sure that all attempts to waylay my friends or myself, had ended with the death of Beaudry, but I had not failed to take proper precautions for security, so I smiled serenely as I walked along. I was conscious of my own strength, and the fidelity of my friends, what more could I have? Did not the great Napoleon pick me as one specially fitted for so great a trust as the preservation of his own life? The Empress had received me with favor, and I was already one of the most popular men in the city, and so, prompted by a sense of pride, I held myself in reserve, disdaining many things that other men found harmless and amusing. A sense of my own greatness afforded me great satisfaction, and I decided to return to the hotel and say nothing to the Doctor about it.

I was aroused from these reflections, by the sight of two men rolling across the pavement fighting viciously. An affair of this kind always attracted me, so I hurried along eagerly watching the movements of the struggling men. Several others had already gathered, and as I approached were discussing the probable result of the

contest, some favoring one, and some the other, and encouraging their favorite by suggesting different things to do. At last, one more eager than the rest, raised his foot and kicked one of the fighters and was about to repeat the kick when I interfered. This seemed to excite others of the spectators, and a rush was made for me. How I did fight that day. I had always liked an affair of this kind, so paid little heed to the blows I received, and was surging back and forth now thoroughly angered by the cowardice of the crowd, and so gripped my sword to defend myself, when I lost consciousness.

No great time had elapsed before I began to regain my senses, but it was sufficient, for I found myself tied hand and foot and being whirled rapidly away in a carriage. A sense of suffocation and agony in my lungs showed me that I was already gagged and unable to make an outcry. I could not see and had no idea what direction we were going in, but as the greatest silence prevailed inside the coach I had ample time to realize that I was a prisoner.

It seemed to me, that we had been riding for almost a day when the carriage was halted my feet untied, the gag and blinder removed, and I was ordered to come out. At first I could see nothing and could not tell by sight which way to go so great was the effect of the blinders. As I tumbled rather than stepped out of the vehicle, someone took hold of my hand thereby saving me from falling. I was moved to thank the man who assisted me, and felt an answering pressure in return that did much to relieve my fears. That peculiar pressure was only known to four living men, the fifth who knew it was already dead. I had little time to think of that then, for I was hurried forward by my captors and placed inside a cell. It was dark when we left the carriage, and the feeble light of a lantern carried by one of the men, seemed to add to the gloom, for outside

its rays, the darkness was impenetrable. This was also true of the inside where we now were, and from the distance we had travelled I felt sure that we were in some old castle or country chateau. In a few moments I was led inside a small room, my hands freed from the bonds that held them, and left alone with my captors, who left a lantern with me. For this I was grateful, as it enabled me to find an old wooden bench, the only article of furniture in the room.

Looking out of the window on the level with my face, I could see the lights of the city gleaming far in the distance, and for the first time realized how skilfully I had been trapped. The sham battle on the street, the interference of the spectators, the blow of some instrument that had rendered me unconscious, the ready carriage, the ropes that bound me, all bore evidence that the plot was set to trap me.

O what a fool I was. Only a few short hours ago, boastful of my strength and cunning, fancying myself the equal of many, and able to take care of myself in any situation, I, The Messenger of Napoleon, the trusted friend of the Empress. I burst out laughing as the truth dawned upon me, and during the rest of the night I had plenty of time to think it over. Would my friends by any chance hear of my abduction, and could they follow the trail, and come to my assistance? Would my unknown friend let the Doctor know where I was? Who was he, and how had he learned our signal? Had the Major exposed our code to the Countess, and was this a plan to get more information from me.

I had great difficulty to restrain the laughter that burst out at times, and echoed and re-echoed through my cell with a thousand uncanny reverberations. At last, worn out by my exciting experiences, I stretched myself on the bench and fell asleep.

When I awoke next morning I felt stiff and sore in all my joints and could not turn my head in any direc-

tion, without turning my body. I was hungry, too. The lantern had burned out, but the sunlight was streaming in through the heavy iron bars across the window. It took but a single glance to satisfy me that I would be unable to escape in that direction. An examination of the door created no hope in me. It was of oak and double boarded, evidently intended to stand against any onslaught. An examination of my effects showed me that they had taken nothing but my sword and pocketknife. My sword belt still buckled around me made me feel the keener how helpless I was without it. The sunlight no longer entering the window seemed to be but a dismal porthole of despair. I was ravenously hungry now, and kicked and pounded on the door with all my strength. Did they intend to starve me? I did not notice how hard I had worked trying to call someone, until the sweat rolling down my forehead, entered my eyes. Then I realized the folly of my method, so I moved the bench to the center of the floor, and, sitting on it, I gazed at the bars across the window, and tried to regain control of myself. I was sure they did not intend to let me die, for had that been their purpose they would not have taken the trouble they did to bring me here alive.

Knowing that it was impossible to eat, I resolved to sleep. This seemed easy, for soon I closed my eyes and with satisfaction to myself the things of the world gradually faded from my mind. How long this sleep lasted I cannot say, but gradually I became aware of others in the room, and in my endeavor to assume an upright position at once, I tipped the bench, and fell my full length on the floor. I could hardly recover in an instant so great was the effect of the fall, but was recalled to myself by a shout of laughter, caused by my bewildered appearance. I made a mental note of that laugh, and those laughing, resolved to punish them as soon as it was possible for me to do so.

"You sleep wonderfully well, sir, for a man who has

feasted so bounteously, wonderfully well, indeed," said one of them.

"I have always been a regular sluggard, and beg your pardon a thousand times, if by my tardiness I have detained you," I answered.

At this they all laughed, and one of them advancing held out a tray on which there was a first-class meal of fried chicken, potatoes, bread and butter and fresh milk. I needed no invitation to eat, nor was one given, but at once began to deplete the tray. I eyed the three men carefully, and resolved to attempt to pass them when they opened the door to depart. True the odds were against me, but I would have welcomed such odds and counted them as even, if my good sword was at my side as theirs was.

Such was my condition that I recognized no odds. I was desperate, but resolved to defer action as long as I could, knowing that every moment's delay was in my favor. Every bite I had eaten had added new strength to my arms, and in silence I was allowed to finish the meal. I had formed a plan, desperate as it was, there was a chance to succeed.

"I am sorry that you were allowed to fast so long but the fact is, there was no one here to wait upon you," said the man.

"O don't speak of it, sir, I am used to such things as this and assure you, that the tardiness of the service only made my appetite the keener."

The visitor who spoke to me was a large and finely developed man, and by the manner of his dress, I judged him to be a person of some authority. Another, the servant, carried the tray. But the third man now came forward and began to speak. I have met some people in my life that I took a dislike to at once, even before I heard them speak. He was one of them. An ordinary bully, one of the kind found only in the underworld of a great city, who often accomplished by cunning and

trickery things that no one else would think of, and like most of this kind, liked to boast of his accomplishments.

"That was a neat little trap you fell into captain. I was sorry to treat you so severely."

"Say no more about it then, for when a child, I had many such experiences."

"Still I flatter myself that it was successful, I felt sure we could take you that way."

"Indeed. O, indeed, are you the man who originated that fight for my benefit"?

"Yes, we wanted to get acquainted with you Captain, and you are so particular about your associates."

"And are you not afraid to tell me this? Do you think there is no hereafter"? At this they all laughed, but the laugh was forced and unnatural. 'Will you do me the honor of exchanging cards, I am anxious to know your name."

"I have no card, sir, but my name is Andrea, August Andrea. When you want me inquire of the Gen-D'Armes." Another laugh greeted this speech. "They always know where to find me."

I arose to my feet, as they turned toward the door, which was opened at a signal by some one on the outside, the servant leaving first, Andrea next, while the large man walked in the rear.

Now was the time I had been expecting, so seizing the bench with both hands, much in the manner of a bayonet charge, I sprang toward him. Instinct must have warned him, for drawing his sword he turned to meet me, and in turning met the bench with his face. It was a glancing blow, but knocked him into the corner. At the same time he dropped his sword, which I secured in an instant, then turned to meet the others if they were inclined to meet me.

Fortune seemed to favor me, for the bench had passed partly through the door, and the guard, in the act of

shutting the door,, jammed it tightly against the wall, the door itself acting as a wedge, making it impossible to shut, and dangerous to open it. In less than an instant I had secured the sword, a long slender blade with a funny grip that did not fit my hand as well as it might, but I was very glad to hold it at that time. I crowded close to the wall near the door, and could hear the man I knocked down, groaning near the opposite wall. Just then the door was jerked violently open, and Andrea bounded past me into the cell. It at once surmised that it was his purpose to engage me in front, leaving an opening for his friends to attack me in the rear. So I kept close to the wall near the door to protect my back, and to force them to enter before they could assist him. I have but little patience with a mechanic who is unable to properly use the tools of trade or calling. But a war-like man, who is unskilled in fencing, excites in me a feeling of contempt. This was the case with Andrea. Mere bully, and wholly coward at heart, he begged me not to kill him, and those on the outside, who were about to enter, seeing how the affair had gone, turned and fled toward the other end of the passage.

Being sure that they did not wait in ambush on the outside, I picked up the lantern they had left behind and ran toward the spot where I heard a noise, only to stop in dismay, as an iron lined door barred my further passage. It would be impossible for me to escape that way, unless some one opened the door for me. Why not get the men I left in the cell and force them to open it. They surely could, yes, and by heaven they would or,—

As I drew near the door of the cell which still stood open, I could hear sounds of someone moving inside, and felt well satisfied with the success that had attended my plans. The sound ceased as I approached, and all was still. The daylight from the window passing through the open door, dimly lighted the passage for a few feet—outside the cell. I stopped for an instant in the doorway.

The blood in my veins seemed to grow cold. My heart almost stopped beating at what I saw. The cell was empty. How long I stood thus I can hardly tell. A careful survey of the passage and adjoining cells, lasting more than half an hour, convinced me that I was still a prisoner.

Knowing as I did now, that there was some secret entrance to my cell, I did not venture inside again. There might be other ways of closing the door on me. but, as I looked inside, I burst out laughing. The bench had also been removed during my absence. So I thought, they do not intend to leave me so dangerous a weapon as an oaken bench. Well, I can hardly blame them for that, but as I rubbed the blades of the two swords together, (for I had taken that belonging to Andrea, as well as the big man), I smiled with great satisfaction. I felt that I was being watched, but try as I did, it was impossible to discover a sign of anyone, so I went back to the iron door, there to wait and watch, for in some manner I was attracted to it, that I felt my greatest danger was near that door, made but very little difference, for it seemed to attract me, like the candle does the moth.

The lantern had burned out, and I sat down to rest myself, for I had been working very hard, and my eyes not yet having become accustomed to the dark, I had been convinced by sundry bumps that it would pay me to save both my strength and temper, which was beginning to rise, and so I sat near the door, kicking at times, to drive the rats away. They seemed to hover around me in droves, sometimes getting so bold that they tried to bite my boots. One bolder than the rest even went so far as to try to bite my hand. This rather amused me, and I resolved to capture him, and so moved my hand slowly toward him. As I did he slowly retreated backward, and all the time I watched the little beady eyes, that sparkled so brightly in the darkness. At last

I made a quick move and tried to grasp him, but he passed from my sight, and my hand striking the iron door. I knew that he had passed beneath it. "Bravo," I shouted, "Bravo." What the rat has done I may do. In an instant I was digging at the dirt below the door. The ground yielded freely to the point of one of the swords, and in less than an hour I had crawled through the opening, and was safely on the other side of the door, mentally blessing that whole family of rats, and wishing them a long life, and a numerous progeny.

A short flight of stairs led me to a door which opened readily and then I stood helpless, blinded by the glare of light that fell upon me. It was well for me that no one was in that room, for even a child could have bested me then.

I could hear the hum of voices in another part of the castle, and was about to retrace my steps when I began to note the objects around me, and was pleased to see that I was now in a large dining room. The table in the center was set for a number of people. So, taking a bottle of wine, and several slices of bread and cold ham, I crossed to another and entered a smaller room than the one I had just left. The noise of voices laughing and jesting, reached me through the door ahead, so I stood for an instant, then entered a closet, as a number of people entered the room. It was one of those closets that have holes bored near the top, for the purpose of letting air inside to the clothing, and I could stand and hear all that passed in the room without danger of detection, unless someone purposely opened the door. In that event, I had a sword in my hand.

Then the sound of merry laughter as the meal progressed, but I, too, was eating, and drinking a toast to my friends, the rats, so I did not mind the fact that I had no company but myself, until two men and a woman came into the room and began to talk, so low that their voices could not be heard in the dining room, but loud enough for me to hear every word.

"What do you think Baron, shall we do as Emilie thinks best, and let this man go, or shall we keep him prisoner until the General has time to review the case?"

"That he is an ingenious man, and dangerous, too, is evident from the method of his attack in the cellar, and should we let him go we would lose the friendship of Renaud, who is suffering so severely with a fractured jaw, and incur the enmity of Andrea who lost both his ears in the encounter. It is evident that a man so marked for life, seldom forgives the man who marked him."

"The affair must have been very interesting," broke in the voice of a woman, "one man against five, and a fight to the finish in a cellar. No wonder Napoleon wins battles with such men." Here she laughed musically. I had already discovered it was Emilie D'Mendon, who now took an interest in my affairs.

The Baron paused an instant and looked keenly at her, before he replied:

"Sometimes the female friends of such men are more dangerous than the men themselves."

"You are right Baron. But who among you dare to question the loyalty of any D'Mendon?"

It was evident that this question had great effect, for receiving no reply, she continued:

"It is better by far to trust to the virtue of our cause, and to try to win such men by kindness, than to practice the arts of a coward, and win only contempt and hatred. You surely know by this time, that this man will remember this outrage to his feelings and will seek satisfaction for it. Remember Andrea, who lost his ears, although simply doing what he was ordered to do."

"It is because of that we doubt the wisdom of following your advice. We know this man is no ordinary man, and only detain him to protect ourselves."

I now recognized the speaker as Audrey, the banker, with whom I had some dealings since coming to Paris. A shrewd, sharp and powerful politician and financier.

"You need not fear him. No one would suspicion you as one interested in this movement. Your real interest is with the usurper, he made you what you are, with us it is different."

"I too am anxious for the restoration of the King and would gladly do all, give all in my power to accomplish this," he replied.

"We understand you perfectly, sir. Look out the window there, see how that little sparrow flies around your dog's head, see how he darts at the dog, as if the puny thing could harm the dog. But then it amuses the dog. Take care little bird, take care, or the dog will open his mouth and swallow you. Baron, can you read a lesson from the bird and the dog."

"You mean me to infer"—

"That we understand you perfectly. You prefer to be the friend of King or Emperor, no matter which, if they are in power, and some day Napoleon may discover the true state of your mind. Then like that little bird with your dog, so will it be with you. But, if on the contrary, we are successful, and the King is restored, you will receive great powers, but never full confidence, for we know you."

"Madamoselle, you are wrong. This house, my fortune, my life, all are enlisted in the cause of the King."

"Yet Napoleon loves and trusts you. Napoleon made you rich. Now you hope to betray him, and be honored by our King. Only yesterday you sent a messenger to the Emperor, assuring him of millions, this money to assist him to more firmly bind him to the throne of France. Today you counsel us to do that, which if discovered, would cost us life. Look into your own heart, then tell us, can we trust you"?

"You do not understand me," Audrey exclaimed, now goaded beyond endurance, and anxious to change the subject. "You do not understand my motives. I have instructions from St. Armand himself to keep this man a prisoner here."

"And did St.'Armand instruct you to starve the man? Surely not. Yet he only had a bite to eat after I arrived and demanded it. You could have given him food to eat. You could have given him something to drink without running any risk, through many of the secret passages of this house, which you know as well as I do. Why do you not send him something to eat now? Are you afraid"?

The earnestness of this speech was not lost on me. I noticed the Baron, who nervously opened and shut his snuff box, while the banker seemed to shrivel before her sarcasm. I was surprised that she should interest herself in my behalf, for her every interest was opposed to my duty. I could not understand her very well, but this may be laid to the fact, that I had but very little experience with women. It may be that she was guided solely by a spirit of humanity, but of one thing I now felt certain, that a meal would be sent to the cellar, and my escape discovered.

I heard Audrey call the butler and order food prepared, and as Emilie and the Baron had now entered another room and passed on out of sight, I was shocked to see Audrey return with a bottle of wine secured in the dining room, and pour the contents of a phial into it. I was surprised at the baseness of the act. He intended to poison me rather than let me escape or set me free. Then calling his butler gave directions regarding the food, then went into or through the outer room.

To my surprise the butler tossed the bottle of wine out of the window, and substituted another from the table. Then when joined by two other men, lifted the tray, and went out. I was just in time to see them disappearing through a section of the wall which was fancifully decorated, but satisfied that I could do nothing there, turned to retrace my steps, then started back in surprise. Emilie D'Mendon stood before me.

"You must be careful," she spoke in an undertone

at the same time looking anxiously toward the outside. "There may be those here tonight who would prevent your departure. The butler is an old servant of mine, and this house belongs to my estate, although rented to Audrey. So the butler knows the place, and will show you how to leave the grounds by a secret way. He already knew of your escape from the cellar, even knew where you were secreted, and confided his discovery to me. I will meet you in Paris tomorrow. In the meantime use your good sense, and do not expose yourself."

Turning quickly, she hurried away, before I had opportunity to thank her. I could not understand her, she was a most remarkable woman, and I had never met another just like her. I was thinking thus as I once more entered the closet, and had only a few moments to wait for the return of the butler and his guard. They stopped directly in front of the closet, then one of them said:

"I am thankful that we did not have to carry the meal through the cell to him. They say he is a most dangerous madman."

"Indeed we are lucky to get off so easy," answered the butler. "He might have killed us all, or perhaps two of us, and forced the remaining one to lead him from the house, and as you know he might as well kill all three at once, for we would surely be executed as warning to others to be careful. Now you two go and get the horses from the groom, and lead them to the side entrance. Be sure that no one sees you. They are to start on a secret mission in a few moments, the groom has instructions. Now make haste."

The two men left him standing in the middle of the room. He crossed to the door and picked up something. I could not tell what at that distance, then he walked to the window, and from the curtain I saw him take three pins, then he came toward me, and whisper, Come cut.

As I stepped outside he was just straightening himself. He had a small flower in his hand. I had noticed several flowers of this kind in Emilie's hair.

"How did you know I was there"? I inquired.

For answer he held out the flower toward me, and then I knew how well he understood Emilie. The pins in the curtain, the flower on the floor, had each carried a message to him.

Then motioning me to follow him, he re-entered the passage and after a few steps in the darkness, stopped for a moment to light a lantern, then passed several cells, finally stopping before one, he began to laugh merrily, and I wondered at that. At last having selected a key he fitted it in the door, I had grown suspicious of his actions, and fearing that he meditated treachery, and was laughing at my want of experience. I drew my sword, determined to punish him, if he showed any signs of deceit. The door was only partly open when he stepped quickly inside. I was not slow to follow and had scarcely passed the door when I felt, rather than saw, someone making an attack on me. I was on guard in an instant, and by the rapidity of the movements of my adversary, I knew that I had a man of more than ordinary ability to deal with. The lantern burning dimly behind my back threw a shadow on us both, and it was impossible for one to see the other. At last I began to laugh. Scarcely had the first sound left my lips, when my opponent shouted:

"Halt Captain," and lowered his sword at the same time.

"Jean, my brave boy," I exclaimed, as I dropped my sword to the ground and embraced him. Come tell me, Jean, how you came here."

"Suppose you exchange confidences on the way to Paris, for as you know it will be a serious matter for me if I cannot account for every moment of this night," broke in the butler.

Recognizing the truth of this statement, we followed him, and in a few moments were standing outside the garden wall.

"There stands your horses, and here is a letter. Now hurry and do not forget, that not only myself, but Mademoiselle Emilie may be suspected for this night's work, and if so, we trust you to come to our aid."

"That we will," we both answered. "What is your name," I asked.

"Gaspard Pallisoné," was the answer, then he added: "I have a brother in the service of the Emperor, perhaps you know him?"

I was looking at him in wonder, when I felt Jean clasp my arm in warning to me, as well as a way to express his surprise.

"Yes I knew him," I answered, "we were comrades up to the time I came here and a true comrade he was. Now in the light of all you have done for us, and for the sake of our old friend, your brother, you may depend on us if you ever need our assistance. It was thus we left him and started on our road to Paris. I had not the heart to tell him of his brother's death.

"The Emperor was greatly pleased with the report I carried to him, so General Lascelles assured me. He also said that the Emperor is proud of his ability to read men, and your success, makes him feel the better satisfied with his judgment."

"Rather say our success, Jean, for each has played a part. Did you meet Pellitier?"

"Yes, and learned from him of the Major's death, also by his advice I came this way. It seemed that he had to fight, too, and only got away because he was better mounted than the men who tried to take him."

"Go on, tell me of it, and how you came to be in the cellar tonight."

"After having delivered my report, by request of the General I waited in quarters for some days, but was

about ready to return, when Pellitier arrived. He told of what had happened in Paris, and I pledge you my word that I was never so surprised in my life. When Pellitier left Paris, he was followed by two men on horseback, who did not try to overtake him. This in itself excited his suspicion, for it is best for men to travel together, when going in the same general direction. Then he noticed two others, who rode ahead, keeping about the same distance away as those behind, and when in the lane, the two ahead turned to meet him, drawing their horses lengthwise across the road. It was then the two who rode behind began to advance rapidly, all four of them drawing their weapons. With a shout Pellitier ran his horse at the fence, over it, and away before they recovered from their surprise. They tried to follow him through the field, but his horse soon out-distanced them, although not before they had fired several times at him. It was thus he passed the Castle we have just left, and as he thought he saw a number of horsemen gathered there his suspicion was aroused, so I came this way, as I carried no telltale papers I was resolved to investigate. About a mile from the castle, I left my horse, and arrived there on foot about the same time you did. In the darkness they mistook me for one of their number and called me to assist them. I saw that we could not hope to escape at that time, but managed to give you a hint of my presence.

"They soon discovered that I was a stranger, so to make sure they locked me in the cell where you found me. I have no cause to complain of the way they treated me, perhaps they would have let me go soon, but I resolved to find you as soon as I could, and for that reason, made an attack on the first one to enter the door. This happened to be yourself. Now tell me about yourself."

It was nearly daylight when we arrived at the hotel, where I found a note from the Doctor asking me to let him know as soon as I arrived, I concluded to wait until

after breakfast. This would afford us a short sleep, for we were both very tired.

"Now may the blessed saints protect you Roul, began the Doctor, as I opened the door for him to enter, for unless you can give a good excuse for all the worry you have caused to me and mine, I'll break every bone in your body for you, so I will."

This was said while holding my hand, and feeling my pulse, then as a further proof that I was not injured he began to punch, and punch me so violently, that I moved away from him.

"Now tell me all about it, Where have you been for the last two days, what were they doing to you, how did they treat you, man don't you see how impatient I am?"

"Now by the ghost of Saint Peter", he exclaimed, as I finished my narrative. "You were born to luck, but it will never do to let a hint escape us about the butler or the woman. And mind me Roul, be careful not to say anything, or do anything of the kind that makes a woman hate, this one in particular seems to be handy, when you need a friend."

"No fear of that Doctor, she has only interfered in my behalf when humanity prompted her."

"Yes, humanity or something else. But be careful Roul, for she is a true woman."

And I agreed with him, heartily agreed with him, for I had reason to be thankful for her kindness, but the hint he had just expressed filled me with misgiving, but of course the Doctor was wrong.

Jean entering at this time was warmly welcomed by the Doctor, and we went to breakfast together.

"I must send a note to my wife Roul. Have you a bit of paper handy?"

I thrust my hand in my pocket to secure the paper for Murphy, and as I did so pulled out the letter given to me by the butler, which I had forgotten until now.

"Did you ever see such a wooden head?" I asked, as I

opened the letter. "I will read it aloud so you will not be under suspense."

Captain LeClaire.

I had intended to meet you at my home tomorrow, but have just heard of something that may prevent my seeing you, in any event go there early and if I am not there, you will find a message awaiting you, this is very important, do not fail me.

"This letter was not signed, but the writing was the same as that which I had received a few days ago. I did not mention that letter to my friends, but invited my friends to accompany me on my visit, for somehow I had a premonition of evil, and wanted them near when it developed. It was the Doctor who struck the knocker.

The door was opened by a servant who admitted us, and ushered us into the presence of Emilie. She was walking the floor, wringing her hands nervously, her eyes were red with weeping, and her attire showed that she had not been in bed during the night. Paying no attention to my friends, she crossed the room to meet me.

"O you have come at last, you have come at last," she exclaimed.

I was bewildered, and the sly wink of the Doctor, added greatly to my confusion. In a voice broken with tears she began to speak.

"Captain, I have an old and valued friend, a schoolmate, one I love as a sister who is in great trouble today. She needs the help of a strong cool headed man, one who fears nothing, one who is discreet and daring, one who is willing to die if need be to protect an innocent girl from infamy. Will you be her friend?"

For a moment I hesitated. This might be a plot to get me away from here without bloodshed. Several suspicions flashed through my mind at once. Noticing my hesitation she resumed.

"I had hopes that I might trust in you for this but find after all I am mistaken. It is only a poor girl who is in Danger.

"By all the saints on the calender," broke in the Doctor, "I am the man you are looking for. Tell me about it miss, and I pledge you my word, The word of an Irish Gentleman, to do all I can to bring her back to you, as pure as she was the day she was born. I pledge my soul to that."

Jean too, salute'd Emilie, but said nothing, although the look in his eye seemed to plead with her to select him.

"I have not declined the task," I said. "Tell us about her."

"This girl has been appointed as one of the maids of honor by the Empress. Her brother had gone to bring her here. But yesterday they found his body laying beside a lonely grave in an orchard about two miles from his home, some say it was the result of a duel, some say it was the work of brigands, but I am sure it was the hand of an assassin, who sought thereby to prevent her marriage to an officer in the service of Napoleon."

Emilie was now speaking to the Doctor, having ignored me for some time, I had felt a choaking sensation in the region of my heart when she began to speak, but as she described the fate of Marie I could stand no more, I seemed to hear a far off groan, as my senses left me.

I could feel them sponging off my face, and heard the Doctor giving orders for my removal as I recovered from the swoon, which had been of short duration, my strength returning almost as suddenly as it had deserted me. I swept them aside, and demanded.

"Tell me all, hold nothing back from me, Marie Montessor is my affianced wife."

"Your affianced wife," She spoke slowly, the color fading from her face. "Your affianced wife? Can I trust you now? can you, will you be discreet? Perhaps it would be better to send one of your friends."

"You may trust me fully, but we will all go to her assistance. If one fails, another must succeed. Jean attend to our horses Doctor, prepare your wife for your absence.

My friends hurriedly left us to make the needed preparations, and Emilie continued.

"The day before yesterday, I heard of the Death of Albert, but as it was only a rumor, I went to the castle where I found you it was there, after you left, I discovered the truth. Not only has Albert been killed but Marie has been abducted. There is no clue as yet regarding her whereabouts, but I trust you to find her.

"Tell me," I said, "do you know an old castle standing on the side of a hill, the castle built like the letter T. The two wings buried in the mountain, while the right angle projects out and down the mountain, forming several stories of the building?"

"You have described the Chateau St Armand, there is a stream of water runs down the hill behind it under the wall of the grounds and passes out on the other side." She answered me with a questioning and pained look in her eyes. Then I told her of my dreams and my distress regarding them.

"You will find her either dead or alive. Now speed to her assistance. Seek her at the Chateau St'Armand, and I will pray for your success. I will trust in you and your friends. You must save her. You will save her. I am sure of it. Should you need anything to secure your success in this, then trust in me, your people shall be my people until we save her. Now go to your Marie. And may God speed you."

I had already reached the door and turned to say something to Emilie but the words froze on my lips. Was this the woman who sword in hand had stood at my side prepared to battle? Could it be the same whom I heard sting the Banker Audrey with sarcastic tongue. Was this the woman who is trusted as a leader of men? Overcome by the peril of her friend, now on her knees at prayer. The sacredness of the scene was too much for me, so as I descended the steps, I wiped the tear drops from my eyes, then laughed as I thought of another scene. One

I knew would take place whenever, I met Captain St Armand.

When I arrived at my rooms the Doctor and Jean were already there, Rapid work I thought, as I saw our horses ready, held by a boy who was waiting for us.

"We will leave Paris as we are, and disguise ourselves on the road." I said, "For we must go prepared to enter the Chateau unsuspected, once in side, Then each must do as he thinks best."

"Let us see to it that we have everything necessary Roul, a few moments now amount to nothing. If mischief has been intended to the young woman, it is already done, and—

"By the eternal God. If they have harmed her I swear to kill every man who took part in it.

I turned in surprise to look at Jean, who stood pale and trembling before us, and could see that he had been greatly moved by the occurrence.

"Spoken like a Man." exclaimed the Doctor. "I could expect nothing else from you Jean, for she is the promised wife of our friend."

When I looked at Jean, his eyes had the brightness of madness, and for an instant I fancied that the horrible plight of Marie, had almost unbalanced his mind. But this look wore away in an instant and he sighed heavily as I took his hand.

"We will save her Captain, We will save her, or, There, there, I have dwelt to earnestly on the wrong they have already done you. But the story as told by the D'Mendon, moved me strangely."

In a short time we had eaten our lunch, and with proper disguises in our saddle packs, had started on our mission.

CHAPTER XIII.

We were quartered at a farm house about two miles from the Chateau St'Armand, And I soon discovered that the farmer had but little love for his neighbors. True it was, that the common people were ever ready to quarrel with the nobility, who in turn despised the working people. This feeling of hatred was strong in the breast of our host, who had suffered in silence many indignities from the caprices of Captain St'Armand, biding his time to avenge himself, so I found him in an ally, ready to do anything, if I but showed him the way. At the same time I did not tell him anything about my business there, and even now, under my direction, he was digging a trench to divert the water from its natural course into the grounds of the Chateau, that would take several days and a large force of men to repair this mischief. During that time things must happen, I had sent Jean to try and enter the Chateau, and was even now standing watching for a signal from him, that would inform me if he had discovered anything. I was also expecting a signal from the farmer, who, with his men, had already nearly executed the work he had to do, I raised my hand to shield my eyes from the sun that beat down so fiercely that day. The leaves of the trees seemed to sigh, as they flitted and rustled under the magic of that cooling breeze. I will never forget the picture, the Castle on the hill before me, the broad winding valley that seemed for a time to enchant and thrill me as nothing else had ever done before, I stood lost in contemplation of the scene, it was beautiful. In fancy I had seen such a place before, at least my fanciful mind seemed

to recall a place that looked like this, then I remembered my dream.

"Man Roul, if you had been born in Ireland, I would hold that you had kissed the Blarney stone. Here you are just three days in this place, and everybody here does just what you want them to, and this has not been the result of money judiciously spent, but rather in response to your sweet and taking way."

"There is just one thing that bothers me now Doctor, Jean."

"Well, but you could hardly expect him to discover much in a day or two, it may take a week to do that."

"In that case he will not need to report, for by to-morrow at the latest, we will turn the water, and see if we cannot induce the men at the Chateau to seek help."

"I am sure Roul, that Jean is inside the castle at this very minute, but it may not be convenient for him to signal to us, so hides his time like the sensible boy that he is. I wonder what this means," he continued, as a party of a half a dozen horsemen rode into view. Just then the Farmer having completed his task on the hill, crossed the road and came towards us, followed by his own men who had been at work with him.

"Are your pistols primed Doctor?"

"To the queens taste," he answered.

"Be ready if they offer to molest us, but don't move unless they do."

"But Roul, That is the Emporer himself, on that white horse to the left. Unless I am greatly mistaken."

"It may be the Emperor, Doctor, but you are a fine old country farmer, visiting your friends here."

We each carried a stout willow about an inch thick, for we were in the habit of practicing fencing with them, so pretending not to see the approaching party, we began to fence in a clumsy manner. This we continued until the party had gotten so near us that it would be impossible to pretend ignorance of their presence any longer.

A shout of laughter greeted our effort, as the Doctor who resembled an old man hit me on the shoulder, and caused me to drop my stick, at the same time I rubbed my arm, as if to smooth the ache.

"Hit him again old man, shouted one of the party."

"What is the meaning of this mock battle?" demanded the Emperor, as he tried to stifle a smile.

"We are just practicing for France and Fidelity." I answered at the same time making an awkward military salute.

"You are young enough to be engaged in real warfare, and it shall be our duty to supply you with proper arms."

"I am always ready to go to war. My watchwords are For FRANCE AND FIDELITY." I placed great stress on the words, at the same time giving the Doctor a signal. The doctor carelessly dropped his hand inside his coat, and at the same moment the Farmer approached us.

"See to it that this man gets a lesson in real fighting," he said, addressing one of his staff. Then he dismounted, his example being followed by the others.

I was in a manner bewildered by the close resemblance of this man and the Emperor. He stood and looked at me with his hand inside the lappel of his coat, his feet apart, in the same attitude I had seen Napoleon so often before. I could see that the Doctor distrusted the signal I had given him, so wonderful the resemblance. Still greater became my admiration of the man's genius and daring, as I reflected, that, at that very time, our army and the Emperor, were less than five hours march from where we stood, and that some branch of it might even now be near enough to signal us. So skilfully was he disguised, that I saw no resemblance to anyone I had ever met, except the Emperor.

"I see that you are both provided with swords," he continued. "You will change them for carbines as the clumsy exhibition you gave as we approached would be dangerous to you in real battle."

Then addressing the farmer, he sternly said: "We are informed that you have several fine horses in your stable, of which our army is in need."

The farmer did not reply to this, but stood looking sullenly at the ground. I could see an angry light in his eyes which he tried to conceal from his questioner.

"You will deliver all such horses at the Chateau St.'Armand. The steward will pay you what they are reasonably worth. We will expect to see them this afternoon, in this fail not."

I knew it was St.'Armand. Even before he spoke of the Chateau. But the farmer who suffered repeated deprivations of this kind, replied angrily:

"Count St.'Armand, I may be forced by you, but I have made up my mind to appeal to the Emperor first."

"Oh, indeed. Well we will attend to you now. You have always been a source of great trouble to us. Perhaps a taste of prison life would improve your respect for your superiors."

As he said this he motioned for some of his followers to advance. It was evident to me that the whole proceeding had been rehearsed, and that the cause of this visit was for the purpose of taking the farmer's horses, giving him little or nothing in return for them.

Two of his party now started to advance, but the Doctor stepped in front of the farmer, his pistol in his hands.

"Stay where you are," he sternly said, "or your friends will be holding a wake over your remains tonight. Stop, he commanded." As others of the party made a move to draw their weapons. "I will kill the first man who moves."

The farmer and his men drew their pistols. Thus we had taken the invaders by surprise, and seeing their disadvantage they wisely refrained from any movement that would invite a bullet.

"What is the meaning of this outrage," demanded St.'Armand.

I was laughing now, but my disguise prevented him from knowing me.

"It means that your time has come St.'Armand. You are now called on to defend yourself. Coward, thief, assassin, that you are, your time has come."

I was hardly prepared for what happened then, for with a shout he bounded to the back of his horse. The horse frightened by the sudden shout, made a bound as if to run, then sank helpless to the ground. At the same instant I regretted that I had been forced to hamstring such an noble animal, but passed my sword through his throat, as St.'Armand regained his feet.

"No use, sir. You must fight me here and now, the fates are against you. No, there is no use to expect help from the castle now," I said, as I saw him cast an anxious glance in that direction. "No human power can save you. You are mine, mine, and your time has come."

He fenced with greater skill than I credited him with possessing. For some reason I fenced awkwardly, and twice did his sword pass under my guard, causing me no little inconvenience and encouraging him to do his best, but I was never in doubt of the result, so in answer to a signal from the Doctor to end it at once, I made a few rapid strokes, and my sword passed through his heart. I stopped to wipe the blade on his coat, but raised my eyes to meet those of General Lascelles, who had arrived on the scene slightly in advance of the Emperor. Their advance had been the cause of the signal from the doctor, although I had not seen them.

"What is the meaning of this"? demanded Napoleon, at the same time he pointed at the body of St.'Armand. I could see that he did not recognize me.

"This man was a double dyed traitor, and I have this day proved my fidelity to France."

The Emperor turned to view the body of St.'Armand, and encountered the look of surprise on the faces of his staff.

"Your Majesty," said General Lascelles, "this man has a wonderful resemblance to yourself."

Napoleon turned again to me and I caught a twinkle in his eye as he looked at me approvingly.

"Sir what did you say," he demanded. "Do you understand that I have forbidden duelling among the officers of the army? But perhaps you are not of the army?"

"I have that honor, sir," I answered proudly.

"This man is disguised to resemble Your Majesty, and fearing that he meant mischief to you, I killed him. He was not only a traitor, but a murderer, and a thief. He, with others, waylaid one of your most valued Lieutenants, killed him, then abducted his sister, my affianced wife, and is even now holding her a prisoner. I am sure that in the light of all this, I have proven to France my fidelity."

As I said this, he made the sign agreed upon with his hand, and then extended his hand to me.

"I heard and understood you the first time, but your disguise is so perfect, that I thought you might have said the words by accident." Then turning to Lascelles, who stood looking on in a sort of amaze, he nodded his head: "It is Le Clair General, and you are right, he has vindicated your judgment."

In an instant I was shaking hands with my old commander, and receiving congratulations from the rest of the staff. A peal of laughter drew our attention to the Emperor, who now for the first time, noticed the farmer and his men, who, assisted by the Doctor, still disguised as an old man, were holding prisoners, the rest of St.'Armands's followers. There was something so ridiculous in the situation that we all began to laugh.

Such little comedies as this, were a regular incident of army life, and the readiness of the Emperor to see and appreciate them, endeared him to the army of France. He was not slow to recognize real merit in the humblest, or to punish anyone who deserved it, no matter what

their station or rank. No wonder then, that the veterans of many wars, loved to tell stories of the little Corporal, that would at once win the heart of the new recruit, and cause them to dare and do all things for a nod of recognition.

"May I ask you General, what you intend to do with your army now that you have no further use for it. Also what disposition you intend to make of your prisoners?"

For a moment I was puzzled at the position in which I now found myself. But crossing in front of St.'Armands friends I addressed them.

"Gentlemen. You have been caught in an act of treason, this is enough to condemn you to death, but our most gracious Emperor, believes that you did not realize the enormity of your crime, and that you were led into it by others who knew better. His Majesty is willing to forgive you, and let you depart in peace, if you pledge yourselves now, that hence forth, you will take no part in any movement against the peace and dignity of our empire, or it's rulers."

As I ceased speaking they advanced toward the Emperor and knelt. He received their parole in a manner that could give no offense, and in a few moments they had ridden away toward the Chateau.

The Doctor was warmly praised for his part in the encounter but the farmer and his men will never forget the kindness of the Great Napoleon, who rewarded them so generously for their loyalty and bravery.

"What was your reason for setting the conspirators free"? he demanded.

"Your Majesty, some of those men will be true to the promise given; some will return to conspire afresh with men and women like themselves. It is for that purpose I let them go. Having seen them, I will know them, and the easier foil their efforts in the future?"

"You are right, sir, now kneel before me."

Filled with wonder at the strange command, I obeyed his bidding, while at a sign the others gathered around us and stood at a respectful distance, while the Emperor, drawing his sword, touched me lightly on the head, at the same time saying:

"General Roul LeClaire, thus do we create you Count LeClaire, a Peer of France, and an officer in the Legion of Honor." Then he turned to Doctor Murphy, and your name sir, shall now be read on our roster, as Senior Surgeon Major, Chevalier in the Legion of Honor.

Never in my wildest flights of fancy had I thought of this great honor, and now to have it thrust thus suddenly upon me in this unexpected manner, bereft me of speech. In vain I tried to rally from the inertia which for a moment held me, and looked at the Doctor who seemed to be recovering from a spell.

General Lascelles stepped out of the circle, and taking me by the arm, assisted me to arise and one by one I received the congratulations of the Emperor's staff. But it was the Doctor who finally broke the spell.

"Roul, my boy, but its big chested I am today, to think that my best friend is so esteemed, and it makes me feel proud for you. But for myself, well Roul, I am tongue tied and speechless, and not a single word have I left to thank the Emperor with. You might tell him of my gratitude if you get a chance." A burst of laughter greeted this speech, for they were all very much amused at the Doctor, who had been unable to thank Napoleon at once, and took this method to express it. Then he placed his arm around my shoulder and I in turn put my arm around the best and truest friend I had ever known.

As we separated I noticed that those who had witnessed this display of affection were greatly impressed. I noticed a trembling of my old commander's shoulders as he turned to speak to the Emperor who now motioned for me.

"We started to look at the valley from the hill-top yonder, and to select such positions as we think of advantage, when we noticed these people approach you. Little did any of us think who you were, but through our glasses we recognized the imposition, and hurried here to arrest the offenders. This will account for our presence here."

I then briefly sketched our experience since my last report to him. He was greatly interested, and at once dispatched an Aide to order up a company of men to place at my disposal to assist in the search, saying:

"You will not need them, but on such occasions it is better policy to make a show of strength. We go to select a position for our troops, that may be the scene of a great battle, but remember your duties are yet unfinished. You are still The Messenger of Napoleon." Then he waved a salute and rode away.

I could not subdue the feeling of pride that swelled within me. Here I was a young man, not yet thirty years of age, who had entered the glorious service of his country as an enlisted soldier, and who, by a series of lucky incidents, had been promoted grade by grade, passing in the race many who I felt sure were worthier by far of such favors than I. O, you giddy bauble of reputation, I muttered aloud, courted by so many, yet favoring so few, you have indeed been kind to me. You have singled me out as an especial favorite and—

"Its time you turned your attention toward the earth again Roul. There now, I forgive you for dreaming a bit today, but for the last hour you have sat on that bench grinning like a happy kitten, and muttering to yourself like the wise men in the fable, but in a short time you should be able to lead a company of fine lads in the search for Marie Montessor."

I looked up at the smiling face of the Doctor. He had discarded the disguise, and washed the dye out of his hair, so following his example, in a few moments, I, too,

had removed the stains from my head and face, and was ready to start at once for the Chateau. It was with regret I said goodby to the farmer and his wife, who had been so kind to us. But when the troop rode in sight I was already mounted and waiting for them as they approached with that easy trot by which they covered ground so quickly. I had already acknowledged the salute of their commanding officer, when they presented arms, and as I recognized some of the men in my old troop, they burst out cheering, *Vive General, Vive LeClaire*. So moved by this display I raised my cap to them, for I had fought with them shoulder to shoulder, as a private in the ranks, marched side by side with them, and was proud of them.

It took but a few moments to make them acquainted with conditions here, what I expected of them, and what they might do.

"Jean Baptiste, your Captain, and the affianced wife of your General, are somewhere in this neighborhood. We must find them *Mon Braves* Avaunt."

"Roul my boy, we may not find Marie there now, but wherever we find her, we will find Jean. The St.'Armands knowing what has happened would not be likely to keep her there, but try to destroy evidence of her enforced visit to them."

As the Doctor said this, he turned his head away from me and gazed into the distance. I knew what was passing in his mind, and gritted my teeth in anguish. ?

"I have already thought of that Doctor, but they would hardly dare to harm her. Perhaps they have taken her to some other place more obscure and secure. But I do not fear the worst, not yet."

"I hope you are right, Roul, but be prepared for anything."

The gates were standing open when we entered the grounds, the servants moving from one place to another, with solemn visages and noiseless steps. A hush of quiet-

ness reigned about the place and in some manner the gloom of the place seemed to settle upon us. My troop, rough soldiers though they were, hushed their mirth as they entered the grounds, and rode in silence to the door of the Chateau. Full well they realized that within those walls were aching hearts, aching for the son, who had so lately entered the door for the last time.

As I dismounted from my horse, a man of about sixty years came to meet me. His stately figure, and the dignity of his bearing, proclaimed him master here. The lines of his face were drawn and showed the suffering he endured at the present time.

"I need not ask you the object of your visit here," he began, "that is too evident. My only son has just been carried inside, killed by some ruffian in the employ of the Emperor, and you have been sent to search the house, perhaps burn it over our heads. I only ask you to defer the completion of your duty until the funeral has taken place. Then do as you desire."

"Believe me, sir, you mistake the purpose of my mission here. I came not to destroy, but to save. I regret the circumstances that led to the death of your son, but had he been blameless, he would be living now."

The old gentleman eyed me keenly for an instant before he replied to this.

"Oh, I know there is always some excuse, some lying subterfuge covering any act of such cowardice, but who dare question the mercy of Napoleon? Of what was my son accused?"

"There is abundant proof that on several occasions he has disguised himself to resemble the Emperor, and secured information for the enemies of our country, thereby causing the death of many brave soldiers. This in itself is enough, but not all. He met and killed Albert Montessor, a boy, within a few miles of his home, then abducted, and has since held prisoner, a helpless young woman, the sister of the boy he killed, Marie Montessor."

"But Albert Montessor was not assassinated. He died fighting with his weapon in his hand. My son was killed in ambush, a cowardly unexpected ambush, without a chance to defend himself by word or deed. Here comes two of the men who were present, and witnessed his death. As he said this he motioned with his hand, and two men who had just left the stable came toward us.

"This gentleman, rather say this officer," he corrected himself, "would like to hear the manner by which my son met his death. You who were present and saw it, tell him about it."

"And tell the truth. Remember, I, too, saw the death of your master."

I had already decided that for some reason they had deceived the Count regarding the death of his son. I noticed several of my troopers scattering in different directions, and knew that the search had begun, then turned to look at the man who was giving the Count a correct statement of our meeting. He also even said that on several occasion they had expected to see the Captain win, as his opponent had been wounded several times. This was true, for even then my two slight wounds were burning, as a new wound often will. I saw the lines on his face relax as he listened to the story, which was a very truthful account of the affair.

"So then," he exclaimed, "he died fighting bravely after all. Jesus I thank you," he added as he reverently raised his eyes. "Now, sir, what is your mission here?"

"I came to secure the release of Marie Montessor, whom I have reason to believe has been detained here?"

"If she has, sir, it has been without my knowledge or consent. I know nothing of it, my son having assumed the management of our estate some years ago, but I will call our steward, who perhaps, may be able to direct you."

As he left me I was filled with admiration for the manly old man, who rejoiced in the knowledge that his son died fighting. "What a soldier he would have made," I thought, "his eye so keen, and brain so quick. He would have made a record with Napoleon."

I looked toward the spot where the Doctor had been and saw him standing some distance away with one of the gardeners, while several of the officers were making notes and exploring the grounds.

In a few moments the Count returned followed by a beautiful woman. She had the most beautiful face I had even seen. Her hair silvery white, was fastened in a circle behind her head, and the suffering of the last few hours had only seemed to lend additional beauty to her features. I felt ashamed to take the hand she offered me, for though she knew it not, I was the man who had caused all this misery. I saw the steward approaching in response to a summons from the Count. At the same time the Doctor arrived at my side.

"Roul," he said earnestly, "let me question this man, and do you stay here until I call you. I have a notion that he can tell us more than anyone else here. Trust to me my boy."

I agreed to this, wondering greatly at the strange request, but knew the Doctor had a reason for it, which I knew he would explain to my satisfaction in a short time. I noticed that a guard of my men marched behind them, as the Doctor led the steward away, still wondering at the precaution of the Doctor, I went toward the Count.

"Once again, sir, let me say I regret to meet you under such unfavorable conditions, but it is one of the stern requirements of a soldier's life."

"Say no more, sir, say no more," he replied. "I, too, have been a soldier."

We were both startled by the piercing scream that escaped the lips of the Countess, as she half staggered

and half ran toward me. I extended my arm to prevent her falling, and as I righted her in my arms, she demanded eagerly:

"Who are you? Who are you?"

"Madam I am a soldier of France, an officer of Napoleon."

"Yes, yes," she exclaimed feverishly, trying to undo the fastenings of my coat. 'I know that. There, there," she shouted as at last successful in this, she tore my shirt front open, and I was powerless to prevent her, for I wondered if the poor woman had not been driven mad by her great loss. Having opened my shirt, she began to kiss my neck and breast, moaning deliriously between her kisses:

"My boy, my boy, my own dear boy, my long lost well loved son."

I glanced at the Count, who now seemed as greatly excited as the Countess. I confess I did not understand her, but the Count who had great experience with women came to her aid, and gently disengaged her from my arms. She turned toward him in a flood of tears, and throwing her arms around him, said:

"It is our boy Henri. Our own dear boy, he whom we have mourned so long." She was speaking and sobbing at once. "I felt it the instant I saw him, but when you stood side by side, then I knew I had made no mistake. See Henri, see, the mark is still upon his breast."

I passed my hand before my forehead as I felt the blood rush to my temples. A vision of my boyhood days stood before me for an instant. I saw my boyhood home. The only one I had ever known, the man whom I had always called father, the dear sweet woman I had always loved so well, his wife. But now, beyond them, I seemed to see another woman who had cared for me. A golden haired woman who used to play with me. Then my mind wandered to the day I left home to go to war, and again I could hear my father say, Roul, when you

are done with war, return home, for this is your home, I have always loved you as if you were my son.

At the time those words were spoken I attached very little meaning to them, but now in the light of the avowal by the Countess I recalled their true meaning. This lovely woman was, indeed, my mother. So I placed my arms around them both and whispered:

"Father, mother," dear hearts, how they responded to that caress. And as we stood thus for the Holiest and sweetest moment I have ever known, I knew that she was right. I was indeed her son, thus we stood entranced, our arms entwining each other. Then the memory of that other son, the one now laying cold in death, crowded upon me. Great God, he was my brother, how could I tell them that it was I who killed him.

She turned and proudly led me inside the Chateau, and calling for a light, for it was nearly dark now, took a seat beside me, and once more opened the bosom of my shirt to gaze upon the picture of the rabbit's foot printed plainly on my breast.

"See, Henri, it is the mark placed on him when he, was but three years old. They told me it would never fade away, and to the good God, I am thankful, that it still remains."

The Count seemed satisfied with this evidence of my identity, for looking earnestly at me, he began:

"When you were about three years old you took great delight in playing in the garden. Our gardener was one of those careful, honest fellows who never let anything hinder him when he set his mind to do a thing. He loved you dearly, and we were not afraid to leave you at any time in his care, but he was superstitious and always carried a rabbit's foot tied around his neck, and always hung one on you when you were with him, which we removed when we came home.

"One time you had a severe attack of the whooping cough, and for several days you were not allowed in the

garden. At last you recovered so far that we left you in his charge, and went to Paris for a few days. The gardener maintained that you were sick because we would not let you wear the rabbit's foot, and so determined to place one on you that could never be removed. So he took you to a sailor who was something of an artist, and together, they printed that picture upon your breast. It was some time before we discovered it, and then it could not be removed. I am glad of it, for what we then considered as a disfigurement, has proven your identity today.

"I was so angry that I dismissed the gardener, and in a short time you were stolen from us. I spent years in searching for you, but all in vain. One day I discovered the gardener, who had secured employment from a neighbor, I demanded my child from him. He was greatly distressed, but easily proved his innocence of any participation in your disappearance. Then he left the service of our neighbor and spent five years in fruitless search for you. At last despairing of finding you, he returned to me, and is now my oldest and best loved servant. I have already summoned him, he is coming here, now take your place at your mother's side. I will enter the next room, and when he has viewed you well, I will return."

As he said this he arose and left us, and not a moment too soon, for an old man entered and approached us. Standing for a moment as I arose to meet him, his hand arrested in the act of making a military salute dropped helplessly to his side, while the veins on his face seemed to swell and turn purple, almost to bursting.

"Well, sir, what are you staring at." I spoke sternly to recall his wandering senses.

Slowly he moistened his lips with his tongue, meanwhile making the sign of the Cross before him. Then after several attempts to speak, he muttered hoarsely: "Mon Dieu, have you indeed turned back the hand of time and made the Count young again? Or do my eyes

deceive me. And is this only a beautiful dream of yesterday."

He spoke slowly as if in great trouble, and my father unable to witness the distress of a servant so faithful, now hurried to my side. Again a fervent *Mon Dieu* escaped his lips, and again he made the sign of the Cross as he gazed at us in turn.

"Does this young man look like my younger days," questioned the Count. "Do you think he is my son?"

The Countess was eagerly straining forward in order that no word or sign might escape her. The servant tried several times to speak before a sound left his lips.

"Why it is yourself, your very self as I knew you thirty years ago."

Now my mother advanced, and, pulling my shirt aside, disclosed the rabbit's foot. He gazed for an instant as if entranced, then sprang toward me. His hot tears fell upon my hands as he shouted in joy:

"It is, it is Baby Henri and God is good, for in my old age he restores the son of St. Armand, and clears me of every suspicion. See Madam, the letter H still hangs between the toes of the rabbit's foot. It was I who placed it there. Now tell me if you will that it is not a symbol of luck, for had I never placed it there, we never would have such proof of his identity.

"It seems but yesterday that I held your baby hand in mine and patted your head as I soothed you to slumber. It is your old friend, Gabriel. Do you know me now Henri, do you know me now?"

Then words failing him, he began to weep. My mother, too, affected by the scene was weeping on the breast of the Count, who was trying to sooth her in the way he had found best for he had great experience, having been her husband for nearly forty years.

I had succeeded in calming the outburst of my old friend, and had just promised to tell him all I knew about

myself, when the Doctor entered the room and motioned for me. I could see by the expression on his face that something serious had happened, and we were outside of the house before he spoke a word.

"Roul, Captain St.'Armand was the worst villian that ever went unhung. We have found both Jean and Marie; Jean nearly dead, and Marie almost demented, but they are both sleeping now, thank God for that."

"Wait a moment before you tell me more. I know you have rendered every assistance in your power to them."

I re-entered the Chateau and was just in time to intercept the Count, who was entering another room.

"Tell me, is this man who was killed today my brother?"

I saw them exchange glances before he replied:

"No Henri, he was not your brother. Why do you ask?"

For answer I hurried to the door and called the Doctor, then leading him to the Count and his wife, I presented him to them.

"Now Doctor, tell them what you have discovered here. Have no fear, tell it as you would to me, for you are now in the presence of my father and mother."

The Doctor looked the surprise he felt. The announcement seemed to take his breath.

"And is it your right senses you are possessed of Roul?"

"Never more sane in all my life, Doctor. Now tell us what you have discovered. After that you shall hear the strange story about myself."

"When you began to talk with the Co—your father, I thought I would interview the first servant I saw, and by good fortune it was no one else than the chief steward. I could tell the minute I asked the first question that he knew what I wanted to know, but he was mighty uncivil about it, so I got a squad of troopers and gave

him the chance of telling me or getting shot, so this is the story:

"Captain St. Armand knew that Marie had been selected by the Empress, so took some of his men, among them the steward to waylay Albert Montessor. After killing him, they went to Marie and told her that Albert was injured to such an extent that it would be dangerous to move him. She readily consented, and for that matter was eager to go to her brother, so mounting her horse, she started with them. But after riding several hours she began to suspect something. Her fears once aroused it was not long before she refused to continue the journey. It was here that they began to use force. As you know it is a lonely road here, and they met no one who could help her. They finally entered these grounds, going direct to the stable, where it appears there are several rooms dug into the hillside. Only one of these has a daylight entrance, and it is closed by a big oaken iron bound door, that fastens by some device on the outside.

"As soon as he arrived there, he turned Marie over to the care of the steward and the stableman, and went away for a few days. It would have been well for all concerned if he had stayed away forever, for he began at once, on his return, to torment Marie, making the price of her liberty the surrender of her honor. This he continued for several days. At last getting desperate at her constant refusal to do as he desired, he attempted to ravish her."

A low groan drew our attention to my mother, who had undergone so much of late. I hurried to her side, but she waved me away and motioned for the Doctor to continue, while my father exclaimed:

"Brave heart, poor girl. Bring her at once, that we may take care of her."

"That is impossible at this time, she is sleeping now and it is best to await her natural awakening."

"But of Jean, Doctor."

"I was coming to that. St.'Armand—"

"Your pardon, sir," broke in my father, "don't call him that name. It is an honored one. There is none of our blood in the veins of the viper."

The Doctor paused for an instant, then continued. "Well, as the devil expected company to go with him. He had decided to again visit the outposts of the army disguised as Napoleon. He had instructed his gate keeper to admit anyone who came. That was two days ago, the very day Jean left us Roul."

"Henri," interposed my mother.

"Henri he may be to you, madam, but we who have called him Roul so long, surely you may expected us to forget some times."

"Right, too, Doctor. The habits of a life-time cannot be changed in a moment. Proceed," said my father.

"Well, Jean was mistaken for one of the expected friends and allowed to pass the gates, but once inside he did not know which way to turn, so rode directly toward the stable. Two men, the hostler and the devil, had just succeeded in tying a handkerchief in Maries mouth and were busy tying her hands, when he attacked them. Before they could draw he had run his blade through the hostler, when two other devils who had followed him inside assailed him in the rear. The devil himself bolted and ran outside, for he was a coward at heart. Jean turned upon the other two with such vigor that they rushed out of the door, throwing it closed after them. Well the contrivance I mentioned before held it fast, and with two such wounds as Jean had sustained he could do nothing but wait, for he knew we were coming soon.

"The devil never sent them a bite to eat, but there was some corn stored in one of the rooms, and if it was his intention to starve them he failed, for they ate the corn, and as there is a fine spring of water in the inner

room, the spring that supplies the stable, they had plenty of water, praise God for that, it saved the life of Jean."

"Brave heart," exclaimed my mother, "will he live"?

"The rest is soon told. The steward tried to persuade Jean to surrender, and they would let him escape, but Jean raved so loudly, that they were afraid to open the door. Marie begged Jean to kill her rather than let her fall into their hands again. They threatened from the outside, but were afraid to enter. It was thus I found them with the help of the cowardly steward, who told me the story. You already know how that man was killed. But you were always lucky and your good fortune was still with you when you killed him."

"Then it was you who killed him, Henri"? said my father." I am pleased that it was you, for unknown to yourself, you have avenged the honor of St.'Armand. I notice that your troop has already camped for the night, so if you will call in your officers we will have supper. After that the Countess will tell the Doctor of our meeting, while you and I make our plans for the future."

Pulling a cord, he awaited until my old friend the gardener approached. He had been among the servants and told them the wonderful story of the rabbit's foot on the lost heir of St.'Armand, and was smiling as he approached us.

"Gabriel, you will take help and remove the body of that man from my house. Bury him any place on the hillside, only don't let him pollute this place another hour." This was the last direction given regarding the dead man, and when the supper hour had passed, a lantern dimly burning on the hillside, showed the spot selected for his unhonored grave.

CHAPTER XIV.

I was around early the next morning. In fact the excitement had been an effectual bar to sleep. I had written several letters, among them a report to the Emperor. This I sent to General Lascelles by the Captain in command of the troop, having no further cause to detain them, one to the good old miller and his wife who had raised me, thanking them for the great love and kindness they had shown me, telling them of my fortunate meeting with my parents, and imploring them to assist me with all the knowledge in their possession. This I entrusted to Gabriel, who now was the object of much envy, and better than any other, knew what was expected of him. I also wrote a short letter to Emilie D'Mendon, acquainting her with the death of the man she had known as St.'Armand, also of Marie's sickness, for the Doctor had found her in a very violent fever.

Jean, too, was very low. I wanted to remove them at once to the Chateau. This the Doctor objected to, saying, "let them sleep. We will do nothing to disturb them now, and it may be of little use in the morning." By this I knew that the case of both was dangerous in the extreme. My heart ached for the lovely girl now laying so helpless before me, and as I kissed the flushed and fevered brow, a sob welled up from my heart and escaped my lips. The Doctor placed his arm around my shoulder and led me away.

Her fate is in higher hands than ours Roul. Trust in him. Now go to bed and get what rest you can. The servant will stay with me and if I need you I will send for you."

It was nearly midnight then, and all the rest of the night I wrote the letters I mentioned, while good old Murphy fought his fight with the angel of death.

I was surprised to see my mother entering the room where I was sitting, for the sun was not yet up. A shawl was loosely thrown around her head and shoulders to protect her from the morning air. I saw that she, too, had slept but little if any during the night, so great was her anxiety. Her eyes were still bright with tears, so I drew her gently toward me and kissed her. I did not know if it was the proper thing to do, for I had but very little experience with women, but she, being my mother, made things seem different:

"I have just come from the stable Henri, where the Doctor is getting ready to move his patients here. The condition of both has greatly improved, but he requested me to ask you to remain here until they have been brought inside. Your friend, the Doctor, is a very remarkable man, and I like him very much."

The door was opened and the tramp of muffled footsteps reached our ears. It was the Doctor and the servants bringing Marie and Jean to the rooms already prepared for them. I felt a great longing to go to them. My mother guessing something of what was in my mind placed her hand on my arm with a lovely air of ownership.

"Not now Henri, wait. All things come to them who have the courage to wait and hope. I have proved this, for although the waiting was long, my hopes have been gratified and you are with me again. It seems but yesterday that I kissed your baby lips, and here you are a great big man, and I am almost as much afraid as I am proud of you." And she nestled very close to my breast as I placed my arms around her.

"I am very fierce and ferocious now that I have you captive, and I am determined to exact toll for all that I have missed."

So I kissed her again and again, just as my father entered the room. I could see the pleased look on his face as he came toward us, and somehow I thought he looked wistfully at us, so at once included him in our embrace, for which I confess my own heart was hungry.

"Coffee will be ready in a few moments. The Doctor is ready to break his fast. We must not keep him waiting," said my father, turning toward the door as the Doctor entered.

"Hurry up, Roul, for I am about as hungry as a black bird in winter time, and sleepy, too, though from the looks of you all, I slept more than any one of you."

Breakfast was soon over, but before we left the table the Doctor dropped a white powder into a glass of water, and handed it to me.

"Drink it, it will do you good," he said.

As we entered the parlor I yawned sleepily, and noticed the Doctor bestow a sly wink on my father, but was not aware of its significance at the time.

"How long before I can visit them"? I demanded.

"Not until they have been made ready," was the answer.

So I sat down to think for a moment, and fell fast asleep. I had a feeling of some one helping me to undress, but it was late in the afternoon when I awoke. For a time I was angry at the Doctor, but when he led me to Marie, I knew I could do nothing there. It was different with Jean, who smiled weakly as I approached him.

"Mon Comrade, you will soon be well," I said as I laid my hand affectionately on his brow.

"Yes, Catain," he answered. "Very soon."

The Doctor did not permit me to stay long with Jean, but led me to the garden before he spoke again.

"You see Roul, we can do nothing here but watch and wait. The Count and Countess are both sleeping.

and you will have to nurse the sick tonight, for I must get forty winks myself. The servants are worn out with the strangeness of what has happened here. By the breath of my body, you are a lucky dog, so you are. I had a long talk with your parents today, and I would give my right arm, (looking at the left), yes, both of them, for such a mother as that. And your father." Here he laughed joyously. "He has a rod in pickle for you."

"What do you mean"? I asked, joining in his infectious laugh.

"Well, then, don't let on I told you, but he was at one time counted a fine swordsman, and is still jealous of his reputation as an invincible opponent. When he invites you to go to the armory with him, if you love me at all, Roul, you will refuse to go unless I am with you. There is so very little of excitement around here, that I would not miss it for anything."

We discussed the happenings of the last few days as friends will discuss such events, my letters of the morning being approved by the Doctor, and it was nearly sundown when we visited his patients. Jean was eating a substantial meal, but Marie was still unconscious. The Doctor gave me proper instructions regarding her as we descended to the dining room, where my father and mother had already preceded us, a few bites, eaten in a very short time, then the Doctor retired to rest. I felt sure that he had no sleep for the last two days and nights, notwithstanding his statement to the contrary.

As I entered the parlor I noticed several musical instruments laying around that I had not noticed before, and concluded that my mother was something of a musician, which was true.

"Henri," said the Count, as he produced a pair of pipes, "your mother is used to smoke and will not mind it. She enjoys seeing me smoke almost as much as I enjoy the smoke."

"That being so," I replied, "I will do my best to entertain her, for I never feel so safe as I do when smoking."

"We have heard from your worthy friend, the Doctor, all he knows about you, and I presume you already know that we adopted the son of an old friend, after we had despaired of finding you. We told you a part, and the Doctor all the story."

"Yes, we were talking it over this afternoon," I answered, "he is very fond of you both."

"Now my boy tell us of yourself. Your education, your ambition, everything," said my mother.

"I received a very good education. My foster parents were very kind to me, and having no children of their own, delighted to watch my progress, they taught me to speak German, for having lived several years on the border, they were proficient in its use. The Doctor taught me to speak English, which I use almost as well as he does, or to use his own words. It is real funny to hear a Frenchman speaking English with an Irish accent." My parents laughed at this, saying of the Doctor: "Of my ambitions, I inherited them from my parents, and have been given my grade as General of Division in the Army of France."

I said this with a great deal of pride, and as I looked at my father I could see the reflection of pleasure in his eyes, he arose to the full height of his commanding figure, his eye sparkling with delight.

"We have already heard that from the lips of your friend, but it seemed so impossible that I could hardly believe him, but you are an officer in the Legion of Honor. I am proud of the great distinction you have won, and although I have never been in sympathy with Napoleon," his eyes sparkled as he said this. "I will honor his judgment, and oppose him no more."

"You are a wonderful boy," exclaimed my mother, "and I am very proud of you."

"A wonderful big boy," corrected the Count. "And although I have had no hand in your education, I trust that tomorrow you will find time to favor me with a bout with the fencing sticks. I have heard of your great skill, and would like to judge for myself."

"So be it then, tomorrow," I replied with a smile, as I thought of the Doctor's warning, "but it is now time to visit Marie and administer her medicine."

My mother accompanied me to the chamber, where we found the servant coming to call me, for she, too, had instructions from the Doctor. When we had given the liquid as directed, my mother wiped the fair face of the girl I loved, then sighed, as she said:

"She is beautiful and good, Henri. A pure, sweet woman, such as I would have picked for you, had I been left to choose. She will make a noble wife, a noble wife, my boy. Be kind to her, poor, dear girl."

For that sweet speech I kissed my mother, then leading her to the parlor left her with my father, and returned to see if Jean needed anything. As I entered his chamber he tossed restlessly on his bed and muttered a few rambling words to himself, then was still. I moved my chair close to his bed and began to think of his prospects. He was such a man as I would have chosen for a brother, and I almost regretted that he was not, or at least that I had a sister, who, well—

He was speaking again. At first feebly, then more rapidly and distinctly, but there was no sense to his raving.

"I, too—I have always loved her—No Marie—I'll kill you first—keep out—Dam you I say—keep out—The—Roul will avenge us both—he will have a—terrible terrible—score to settle—he will settle—with blood—I have always loved—before my God—There I knew you"—

The voice of the sufferer died away to a whisper, and I began to wonder who he loved. Was it possible that he, too, had a romance. He had never told me so, but

his words, well, there are some things too sacred in the eyes of such men, to be mentioned to their best friend on earth. So the time passed away, sometimes he tried to raise in bed, sometimes talking at random, and often raving at the foe outside, living over the maddening experiences of the last few days.

The servant came to call me, for Marie was awake, and it was again time to give her medicine. I raised her gently to allow the servant to move the pillow, and as I did so, spoke caressingly to her, but she was insensible to that, for by no word or sign did she recognize me, but seemed to shrink from me and to shudder at my approach. This was also true of the servant who now kept as far from the bed as possible.

It was after midnight when I sent the servant to bed in an adjoining chamber, telling her that I would call her if she was needed. Then sitting in a chair near the window, I let the summer breeze blow on my face. This was soothing and comfortable. I was thinking of Jean and of his past, which I now felt sure had not always been a happy past for him. How pleasant the breeze is I yawned. How happy I would be if Marie were well and strong again.

The scene from the window of that room was one of the fairest I have ever looked upon. The hills just across the valley seemed to throw their shadows back against the trees growing on their side, and the tree tops, kissed by the light of the moon now shining so brightly, seemed to tinge each leaf with a hue of silver as they waved back and forth. A spray of beautiful light seemed to sparkle between them and me, and lend an unknown enchantment to the beauties there. For some reason the bell of the old church was ringing a joyous peal, and seemed in harmony with the childish voices that broke out singing an anthem of praise, and as their voices died out in the distance, I could hear the voice of the meadow lark as it took up the sweet refrain, adding still greater

pleasure to the joys I already felt. The door of the church was opened and a happy group of boys and girls came rushing gaily out, laughing and jostling each other in the excess of their merriment. Would wonders never cease. That first girl must be Marie, or someone greatly resembling her, and the boy at her side, could I believe my senses, yes, now I was sure of it—it was Jean Baptiste, only younger than I knew him to be. Younger than I had ever seen him, and free from care, too. As I looked he snatched the book from Marie and started to run away, but with a spring she caught him, and after a short struggle for the possession of the book, he put his arm around her and they walked away together.

A scream, loud and piercing, startled me and I sprang to my feet. Marie was sitting up in bed, a look of terror on her face, and as she tried to cover her eyes with her hands, she cried in agony: "Jean, Jean. Save me."

The servant now came to my assistance and together we succeeded in calming her and laying her down, then giving her another taste of medicine, I sent the servant to sleep again, for I was ashamed of my weakness. I had been asleep and dreaming, but I was wide awake now, and thought of what the Doctor would say to me when I told him of this incident, so I went into the hallway and lit my pipe. It was comforting anyway, and might fortify me to meet the wrath of my friend.

The incidents of the dream were still strong in my mind. I had grown to regard my dreams as auguries and wondered if it could be true. Of one thing I was sure. I had seen the fulfillment of that other dream when I dreamed of Marie in the castle, but with this difference, it was not my name she called, but Jean, Jean, save me.

A moan from Jean's room attracted my attention and I hurried to his assistance. He was wide awake now and seemed greatly relieved to see me.

"Roul, my good old friend, I was dreaming of you," he said. "I am glad it is not so. Glad you are here, so glad, so glad."

I gave him a drink of water, and as he seemed about to go to sleep, I went back to Marie, for I was fearful that she might have a recurrence of her spell. So passed the hours of that long, weary, dreary night. With nothing more to do than think, but if for a moment my mind wandered into other channels, I was recalled to myself by the sudden remembrance of that piercing, despairing cry, Jean, Jean, save me.

After all it is the most natural thing that she should call on Jean to protect her. He was my friend, and was near her during the last conscious moments of her great distress.

I was glad when the Doctor came, as he did early in the morning. Jean had taken a favorable turn in the night time, and his recovery was only a matter of time.

The sun was brightly shining through the tree tops, when the Doctor, my father and myself sought the shade of a large tree. We were accompanied by a servant who carried several fencing sticks and masks. On the toss up for opponents, the coins decided that the Doctor and my father should meet each other first, the Doctor and myself next, and my father and myself last.

My mother now appeared with the Doctor's wife, who had arrived during the night. I was delighted to see Bridgey, who looked so fresh and fair that morning that I mentally complimented that country where such women are born.

It was a very pretty engagement between the Doctor and my father, as they were very evenly matched, which is saying a great deal for my father, for the Doctor was a fine swordsman, and my father having made a very pretty roulade, struck the Doctor a sharp blow on the thigh, after which I faced my friend holding my

stick in my left hand. Then for fifteen minutes we two had a fine practice bout. I could see my father watching me throughout the play, a smile of satisfaction on his face, and rightly surmised that he had not exerted himself with the Doctor, but had something in reserve for me, so when I faced him my stick was in my right hand.

"So you are a two-handed man," he remarked, smiling.

I noticed that a goodly number of the servants had been attracted to the place, to watch us, but did not know then that the Doctor had told them about the match, for he took advantage of every opportunity to impress my people with my greatness, and was trying to show them that the young master, as they called me, was able to hold his own. I was not in sympathy with this idea of the Doctor, but knew he would be discomodod if I did not allow him to manage my campaign, as he called it.

"Take care of yourself, Count, for you are facing the wizard," said the Doctor, as our sticks met in air for a fraction of a second. I waited for the Count to begin, but as he seemed slow in doing so, I made a fierce lunge for his body, recovered as quickly as I could then rouladed for the left shoulder, at the same time springing past him on the right, striking his stick on the quarter, and knocking it from his hand.

"That is a low down trick of his Count," said my friend, as he picked up the stick and handed it to the Count. "The last time he did that to me I gave him a good beating for it. Now Count, do your best, and together we will teach him better manners."

My father, once more on the defence, smiled pleasantly, but said nothing and it was only an instant before I had a chance to repeat the stroke on the other side and again disarmed him.

"What kind of fencing do you call that"? demanded

the Doctor. "Stand up to it like a man now, you baby, you to run around an agreeable antagonist like that. Beat the head off the rascal, Count, or are you afraid to do it, just because he is your son? Never mind that, Count, send him to the hospital and leave the rest to me."

Again we were at it, the Doctor all the time joking about our method of attack and defence. I was now fencing in place. That is to say, standing still, and after a few moments, began to score at will, to the amusement of the Doctor who berated my father in a good natured way about it.

The result of the exercise pleased my father greatly, and as he signalled the servant to return the sticks and masks to the armory, he told my mother and Bridgely his opinion about it.

"The Doctor said he was a wizard at fencing, and so he is, and more, too. In my best days I was not his equal, he fights with his head, hands and feet at the same time."

"I say, Doctor, that is a wonderful stroke. The one he disarms you with."

"Yes it is Count. I taught him that stroke myself. You never see him use it with me now. The last time he did I put something in his tea and he has been careful since then." So laughing at the humor the Doctor injected into the affair, we entered the Chateau. . .

It was easy to see that Bridgely and my mother had formed a great liking for each other. The stories told to Bridgely by the Doctor were repeated to my mother, and they lost nothing by the telling, for Madam Murphy is a very bright woman with a great imagination.

The fencing exercise became a part of our daily duties, for I needed the practice. So I sometimes engaged the Count and the Doctor at the same time. And the Doctor's wife now began to take exercise with us, and being both strong and quick, made wonderful progress in the art.

My mother, Bridgey and myself were sitting together on the veranda. The Doctor and the Count were inside busy at a game of chess, when we saw old Gabriel driving toward us. In a moment the party were assembled to hear his report.

"Your foster father is dead. And that good old lady would tell me nothing, saying she would write to you. Here is her letter."

Gabriel handed me a letter, which I handed to the Count, who read:

"My dear son Roul:—

"I rejoice with you to hear your good fortune. I knew the first moment I saw you that you were not the child of any wandering gypsy." Here my father paused and seemed lost in reflection, then continued: "A group of about thirty gypsies were travelling in this part of the country stealing everything they could as they went from place to place. This became unbearable, so at last the farmers determined to drive them away. My husband was one of those who went to the gypsy camp for that purpose. The gypsies, learning of the move against them, were nearly ready for flight, when our men descended upon them. Without stopping an instant, the gypsies drove away as soon as our men were in sight of their camp, leaving some of the stolen articles laying there, they being afraid to tarry long enough to secure them all. Among other things they left you. You were found under some bushes where you must have been laid to sleep and forgotten.

"No one seemed to want the child of a thieving gypsy, so we kept you and right gladly did we do this. Our own child had died about two weeks before and my heart was hungry for the love you gave me as soon as you learned to know me. I had lately undergone an operation, and knew that I would never have another child of my own, so gladly I welcomed you, dear son of my heart."

Here the Count's voice trembled with emotion, and

he cleared his throat several times before he proceeded:

"The mark of the rabbit's foot on your breast, was all we had to guide us in an inquiry for your parents, but we were unable to discover them, and I may seem selfish when I say, I thanked God because of that, for I loved you. I knew that in some place some woman was weeping for you, but I was honest and tried to find her."

"She shall come here. Come here and live with us all the rest of her life," he exclaimed earnestly, at the same time looking at my mother, who, clasping my hand between her own, nodded her head vigorously, not daring to trust her voice in speech. Then he continued to read:

"Now my dear boy, since I heard from you, my husband has died and I am all alone in the world, and would gladly welcome you home, for this is always your home. All that we have belongs to you. You were legally adopted by us and are our heir, so when you can spare a few days' time, then come. I am not selfish my son, and gladly resign you to the mother whose blood flows in your veins, but hope you will sometime think of that other mother, the one who loves you so well.

"AIDE LeCLAIRE."

My eyes were not the only ones that were dim when the Count had finished reading the letter. For a few moments no one spoke. My eyes were fastened on the Doctor, who gripped the chair convulsively with one hand, and watched the toes of his boots earnestly as if in some way they afforded him relief. But at last my mother broke the silence.

"Gabriel, just as soon as you are ready, you will take the light coach and return for her. How soon can you start?"

"In about an hour, Madam," was the answer.

"Go then and prepare for the journey. I am going to write to her Henri. Have your letter ready to inclose with mine."

In less than an hour, Gabriel had started on his journey, bearing two letters that would be sure to accomplish the result desired.

Having told Jean of the letters, and my determination to return to Paris as soon as the condition of Marie would allow it, I entered her room to find her eyes open and fixed upon me. How proud I was as I stooped and fixed a kiss on that pale brow, for the light of recognition was in her eyes for the first time since she came here.

I called the servant and sent for the Doctor, rejoicing that I was the first person to see her thus. The Doctor meeting the servant on the way was with us in a moment. And in a few moments, he predicted a rapid recovery, and added the usual professional advice.

"She must be kept quiet and not allowed to talk."

"But there are a few things I must tell her now Doctor."

"Why"? he demanded sternly.

"Because her eyes are asking the questions." So I bent over her and spoke quietly. "You are in the home of my parents. Jean is recovering nicely and will soon be well. You are safe, perfectly safe here."

Her eyes seemed to thank me, as the Doctor, taking me by the arm, led me toward the door.

Business called me to Paris. Pellitier was there anxious for my arrival, and because I could no longer delay my departure I was allowed to see and speak with Marie for a few moments, on the second day after the fever broke. My mother had already become a welcome visitor to the sick room, and was with her when I entered.

I prolonged my stay as much as possible, and although we spoke but little, I assured her that she was home now, and had powerful friends to protect her. Then after kissing her goodbye, I said goodbye to them all but my father, who accompanied me to Paris on business of his own.

CHAPTER XXV.

The next morning I surprised Pellitier at breakfast, and had scarcely seated myself at the table opposite to him, when my attention was attracted by the entrance of a group of people, two ladies and a man. A short heavy set man, by a movement of his thumbs, Pellitier indicated him, at the same time whispering:

"The Baron and Baroness Maupin. Does he know you"?

"Good. I have never met the Baron in my life, yet he may know me."

"I have heard that he is of a very quarrelsome disposition and I believe he came here in the interest of some Royalists. They say he is a sure shot, and never fights with swords."

"I have grown tired of his kind, Pellitier, and have about made up my mind, to introduce a new method in meeting them."

"Then Captain, it would be well if you could put it into execution at once, for he has selected the Count D'Sayre as his first victim. In fact I second the Count in an affair this afternoon. Pistols at ten paces. Maupin seemed very sure of the result, and D'Sayre is not familiar with any kind of weapon. The affair was forced on him and I believe his wife is a party to it. Now be careful. He has noticed us. Yes he is coming this way."

As the Baron approached our table I pretended not to notice him, but was rising to my feet as he stopped at the end of our table. Striking the table fiercely with his hand he looked savagely at Pellitier, and demanded

in a voice loud enough to be heard all over the dining room:

"Do you know, sir, that your conduct is insulting and insufferable? You should be ashamed to act as you do toward ladies who have never given you such cause."

"You are a liar, Baron Maupin," I said, this in voice far more distinct than his. He wheeled around to meet me, for his remark had been addressed to Pellitier. As he did so I seized him by the throat, and, shaking him much as a cat does a mouse at play, I dashed him to the floor.

In an instant the wildest confusion prevailed inside that room, while from the outside people came rushing in to see what was taking place. The Baroness rushed to the side of her husband. He was insensible, the blood flowing from a cut on his head made by striking the corner of a chair when falling.

A hurried examination by a Doctor also showed that his arm was broken at the shoulder, and by good fortune it was his pistol arm that was disabled.

The proprietor, accompanied by the Prefect of Police, entered the room and forced a way through the excited crowd to where we were standing.

"What is the meaning of this outrage," he demanded, his voice trembling with anger.

"Why, if I am not mistaken," I answered, "it means that there is a bully who is ready for the hospital."

"How dare you do such a thing in my house? You are the Prefect of Police, arrest him. I will prefer charges," he shouted to the man who accompanied him.

I was so interested in the movements of the excited people before me, that I failed to notice the other woman from the Barons's table had crossed the room, and was now near the Baroness, who had been helping in the examination of her husband.

The Prefect of Police approached and laid his hand on

my shoulder, just as a scuffle behind me drew my attention to the two women who were fighting fiercely. In an instant we had separated the combatants, when to my surprise I discovered the beautiful features of Emilie D'Mendon. She was bleeding from a cut on the cheek, also a severe gash on her hand, attested to the fact that although the struggle had been short, it had been a desperate one.

"You Emilie," I exclaimed, for I could think of nothing else to say.

"She tried to kill you, Captain, to stab you in the back, I was just in time to prevent it."

She had no time to say more, for the Doctor who had now ordered the Baron to the hospital, began to attend to her wounds, but a few inquiries were sufficient to establish the facts in the case. Our attention having been given to the Prefect of Police, I stood with my back toward the Baroness. She drew a dagger from her bosom, and was in the act of striking me with it when Emilie interfered. The excitement in the room was intense, and I noticed several scowling faces looking in my direction, but I was laughing, laughing as I always did when very angry.

Turning to the Prefect of Police, I said: "If you will accompany me to my rooms, sir, I will be at your service in a moment." Then to Pellitier: "Get a conveyance and see to it that she arrives safely home."

"Wait a moment, this man is also my prisoner."

"You have no prisoner here, sir," I answered, "unless it is the Baron Maupin, and I think he is more likely to go to a hospital than to jail."

"We shall see," he replied, as we started toward the door, "we shall see."

On arriving at my rooms, I presented him with my authority, given under the hand and seal of the Emperor.

"Oh," he exclaimed, "we have been advised by Las-

celles to give you every assistance in our power. Have you any commands?"

"No, nothing, only that you keep our identity a secret and see to it that the Baron gets into no further trouble."

"He has trouble enough now I think." He said this in a smiling manner that was pleasing to my vanity, so procuring a bottle of wine, I offered him a glass. "To your health, Monsieur Le Prefect."

"And to your good health," he replied, "but by what title may I address you."

"As the Viscount St'Armand." Here he bowed his head. "The Count LeClaire." Here another bow. "Officer of the Legion of Honor, and General of Division in the Army of France," for I was determined to overawe him at once. He bowed several times as I repeated my titles and I was sure that he was completely subjugated.

"You will be careful to keep this a profound secret at all times, while rendering all the assistance in your power to me."

"Your Excellency," he replied, "you may depend on me."

It was then I told him of my experiences since coming to Paris, of the bogus Gen. D'Armes, the fight, my abduction, to all of which he expressed the greatest surprise, and as he left me I felt sure that a vigorous watch would be kept for such parties in the future.

Pellitier entered the room just as the Prefect was leaving, and was properly introduced. The civil officer showed every symptom of delight at the confidence I had placed in him, and invited us to become his guests at his home.

"The D'Mendon was severely cut on both hands and face," said Pellitier. "It took nine stitches to close the wound on her face."

"Poor girl, did you see her home?"

"Yes, in her own carriage, which was at the door. I

also discovered that she came here this morning, to protest against the meeting you so ably prevented from taking place."

"How did you discover that?"

"One of the waiters, who was near the table heard their conversation, and heard her pleading with the Baron to spare someone. The Baron, however, declared that not only the Count, but the Count's second must be punished this afternoon, so you see he had decided to force me to meet him." We both laughed at this. "He must have felt sure of the result in the first case."

"And perhaps the second one. I have heard of such cases where the opponent was shot from ambush by an accomplice. I must insist, Pellitier, that in the future you take no such risks."

As I said this Pellitier bursted out laughing, but as I did not join with him, he asked very pointedly:

"Captain, if I must avoid such risks, will you also avoid them. Will you promise not to do such reckless things as you did today?"

"Of what do you accuse me, my boy"? I asked gravely.

"Of exposing yourself to the demands of all that man's friends, and enjoying the majority of all the risks which I have a right to share."

The twinkle in his eye was too much for my gravity, so I extended my hand, laughing gaily at his drollness.

"Have no fears my dear comrade, you shall have a rightful share of danger in the future."

"Fine," he exclaimed. "I had began to think you extremely selfish."

We now started for the home of D'Sayre and found him in the library in consultation with a notary. He raised his eyes from the paper he was reading, and extended his hand to me.

"Captain, I welcome you back to our city," he said warmly.

"Always busy Count, but why the notary"?

I asked this question in a voice loud enough to be heard by the Countess, who was seated in the room. The Count looked in her direction, and made me a warning sign, indicating that he did not want her to know what he was doing, then he replied:

"In these troublesome times it is best to be fully prepared for any misfortune."

"You are right in that Count, and because of that. I am sure you will change some of the devises in your will."

The Countess dropped the book she had pretended to read since she returned our greeting, which she so graciously did, the Count and notary gazed at me in astonishment.

"The Baron Maupin is indisposed. In fact he will be unable to keep his engagements for a few weeks. But I notice the Countess is not looking well. With your permission I will escort her to the garden, while Pellitier tells you about the accident."

I offered her my arm, and as she walked with me toward the door I could feel her trembling. She glanced sideways at my face as we approached a table in the garden, and I knew that she was trying to discern my thoughts. I seated her at a table and took a chair opposite to her. As I did so she looked straight into my eyes. I accepted this challenge and returned her gaze, smiling at her, as she began to blush under the look she had invited.

"In what part of the country were your born, Countess"?

"In Lorraine, Captain." She said the last word scornfully as if to crush me.

"Do you remember, Countess, if the climate there is very agreeable at this season of the year"?

"No, I do not remember anything about it, Captain."

"How long since you left there, Countess."

"Just six years now, Captain." There was great meaning in the way she used the word Captain, and I felt that she knew more than I had credited her with.

"Of course you remember the place very well Countess and have been longing to see the meadow, the brook, the hillside, and all the dear spots of your childhood. You have had a desire to visit them for so long, so very long."

"On the contrary, Captain, I hope never to see them again."

"Still it has its advantages, the life giving breeze, the joy of the hunt, the open air, the blue sky, love without deceit, life without intrigue, ambition without baseness, and above all these, freedom. Think of it Countess, freedom, so precious to us all."

"If all these things exist there, then, why do you remain in the city, Captain"

"The city is so full of deceit Countess. Why a man here never knows his friend. Today they embrace him and tomorrow embrace his wife. Yesterday they partook of his hospitality, and today they execute him. The wife who swore to love and honor him but a few short years ago, by her acts dishonors him, and helps the assassin in his deadly work. True, if the plan is successful she may still be rich and famous. If her friends are fortunate they may reward, but never honor her. But if they fail, then good-by to all that makes life worth living. Good-by to the friends who forget so soon when one is unfortunate, good-by to the fetes, the balls, the birds, the flowers, the dreams and the pleasures of life. Do you understand me Countess?"

"You talk so rapidly, Captain, that it is hard to understand your meaning."

"The prison cells are dark and foul, Countess. Many of them are tenanted by swarms of rats and mice. Gloomy, slimy walls where no ray of sunlight ever penetrates. You shudder, Countess, the picture is not pleasant to contemplate."

"Captain, why do you tell me this," she asked in a voice so low that I could scarcely hear her."

"I was thinking of Major Pallisone, who was forgetful of his duties to his friend, and went from a woman's arms to his death. Perhaps you already know the story. The husband was unsuspecting, the friend was weak, the wife was base."

The color had receded from her face and she gazed at me in terror, a look of such misery and fright in her eyes that I was moved by pity for her. She clasped her hands together in a state of nervous excitement, and bit her lip until it bled.

"There still remained a chance for her to be a true and loving wife, to help her husband in the discharge of his duties, both social and political. But overlooking this chance, she became the hostess of a noted duellist and entered into another plot to kill her husband who is an inoffensive man, not used to quarreling. That was not all. They planned to drag others into the trouble and remove them effectually. This morning the Baron picked a quarrel with one of your husband's friends and is now in the hospital. Countess, I said your husband."

With a moan of anguish, the Countess slipped from her seat and fell insensible on the floor. I did not call assistance, but waited for her to recover, which she shortly did, and after allowing her to recover her scattered senses I was about to leave her, when she stepped before me, a haunted look in her eyes, and trembling from head to foot.

"Captain, you are the friend of my husband. Then give me a chance to redeem myself. I promise that I will be steadfast and true, trust me," she pleaded, but I did not answer. "I did not realize what I was doing. I know that I am guilty, but trust me now, you will never regret the action, sir, please, please trust me."

"Yes, Madam, I will trust you. I will give you the opportunity you beg for. I believe you will be true."

Seizing my hand she kissed it feverishly, all the time murmuring her thanks in a voice choked with tears. When she had sufficiently recovered we entered the Chateau, the Countess going at once to her room, while I entered the library, where the Count and Pellitier were discussing the incident, the notary having been dismissed. When the countess had removed the traces of tears from her face, she returned to the library, and taking my arm, led the way to the dining room. Immediately after the meal I excused myself, and hurried to my apartments to meet my father, who was waiting to visit the Empress in my company.

The Empress listened to the story of my birth with such evident delight, that she won the heart of my father, and his hand with it. She heard of the terrible sufferings of Marie with horror, and expressed a desire to meet Jean at once on his recovery. All this she heard from the lips of my father. Then turning to me, said in mock seriousness:

"Now, sir, I am offended with you."

"Your Majesty, please, I am conscious of no wrong."

"Yet you let me believe that you were only a captain in the service, when in reality you are a General. In this letter from the Emperor, he informs me that the Count LeClaire is the youngest General of Division in the Army of France."

"I am the Viscount of St.'Armand," I said proudly.

"True, the Emperor speaks of that, but you are also a Count by your own right."

"Yough Highness, I am, indeed, a happy father," broke in the Count, unable to restrain himself any longer.

"Then Count, I shall expect you to come to our receptions at all times when you can make it convenient, and will be delighted to receive a visit from your charming wife, whom I greatly admire."

During the next five days I called several times to inquire about the condition of Emilie, but the nurse would

not allow me to see her, saying she was in no danger, but we do not want anyone to see her, until the bandages have been removed. Somehow I felt greatly interested in her. On two separate occasions she had defied her friends, to render me great assistance, and I was disappointed at not being able to see her. I had decided to tell my father about her when a messenger brought us the glorious news that Marie was able to go outside, and that my foster mother, Aida LeClaire, had arrived there. So the Count hurried his departure, being anxious to meet the woman who had done so much for me, exacting a promise that I, too, would return soon.

My visits at the home of Emilie I continued every day, for I did not want her to believe me ungrateful. But one day, about two weeks after she was injured, I was ushered into a beautiful sitting room, while the butler went to inform the nurse of my presence. I noticed many fine pictures hung around the walls, also some curious and costly carvings on the mantle and table, but as I continued to admire the different works of art, nothing pleased me so well as the small miniature of Emilie D'Mendon herself, which seemed out of place among those larger and more expensively framed pictures.

No matter what part of the room I was in, I would return to look at that face. At last, unable to resist some impulse I had never felt before I thrust it under the breast of my coat. No, I did not intend to steal it, in fact I could not help the act, though my life depended upon it.

I had scarcely secured the picture, when the nurse entered the room. I felt guilty of some horrible crime as she looked at me, and wondered if she had seen the act.

"Madam, the Duchess, has not yet recovered sufficiently to receive visitors. Will the Captain kindly call in about a week or ten days from now"?

I bowed as I received this message, and asked many

questions of the nurse, delaying my departure as long as possible, hopeful that she would leave the room, for I had decided to restore the picture, and only awaited a favorable opportunity to do so. This, however, was denied me, for she began to dust the pictures, and fearing detection while I was there, I hurriedly left the house.

I started for the Chateau St.'Armand that night, having given Pellitier instructions regarding his line of work during my absence, and after a pleasant night ride, approached my home about the middle of the forenoon next day.

My heart was beating rapidly as I entered the gate, and as no one seemed to notice my arrival, I rode directly to the stable and turned my horse over to the groom, then started through the garden toward the house, intending to surprise them all. Crossing to an arbor of grape vines, with the intention of concealing myself, while I shook the dust from my coat and hat. I heard some one speaking inside, and waited for them to leave, but after waiting a moment, I was about to pass on, when I heard the voice of Marie saying: "

"I heard you were starting for Paris today, Jean, and so I came here to say goodby, and to thank you for the manly courage you displayed in my behalf."

"And could you think of my doing anything else after all the years of our early friendship and love? O, Marie, my heart's love, how could you be so cruel?"

"O hush Jean, they told me you were dead and I believed them. Then they urged me to marry St.'Armand, saying that Albert would be publicly disgraced if I did not, even threatening me with such horrors as I was made to feel. It was then that Roul came into my life, and I felt that I could trust him."

I was keenly interested now. Every word that she spoke seemed to pierce my brain and burn their way to my very soul. I could feel my heart beating madly and gasped for breath, as she continued:

"What could I do. He was so noble and kind, and when you came to nurse him you acted so indifferent, that I was both hurt and angry. You should have spoken then."

"I was led to believe that you had chosen St.'Armand of your own free will, and had discarded me because he could supply you with the things my poverty forbade."

"But you should have spoke Jean, for even then I was under no obligation to anyone greater than I was to you, but now it is so different, so very different. O Jean, is there no way to remedy this evil. Must I continue this unholy alliance and marry Roul, while you and I both know that from early childhood we have been a part of each other."

"Do not speak to me like that Marie, I am not strong enough to bear it. Roul is my friend. He honors and respects me, and I love him as a brother. You are his affianced wife, so in future we will meet as strangers, if we meet at all."

"Then Jean, I pray that we may never meet, for my heart would break."

"We will not, Marie, for I will seek a transfer to America just as soon as I am able to travel, and there in that far-off land, think sometimes of the one woman I have ever loved. The wife of my best and truest friend. And I will be happy, Marie, for I will know that you are the pure, noble, honest wife of an honorable man. Now go inside dear and may Heaven bless you both as I do."

Gradually the meaning of their conversation entered my mind, and after the first moment or two I secured control of the feeling of despair that had so nearly mastered me, and was myself again. I felt a greater regard for Jean than ever before. He was a true friend indeed. I could hardly understand Marie, but I could excuse that warm hearted love, that led her to me for her brothers sake. Then I remembered that it was after she heard

of my freidship for Albert, that she had promised to become my wife.

The mind thinks rapidly under such conditions, and my plan was already formed when she turned to leave Jean. Then I stepped in front of her. This was more than she could bear, a low moan escaped her lips, and she sank insensible to the ground. We were two very busy men then Jean and I, and it was several moments before she opened her eyes again, then as we raised her to her feet, she linked her arm in mine and smiled, but it was not the smile I had hoped to see.

"Take me to the house, Roul."

"No my dear sister. Jean shall do that. You pair of foolish children, you should learn to trust me always."

"There was a look of wonder on the face of Jean when I clasped his hand in mine, and as I placed Marie's hand in his, she fell sobbing on his breast. So I hurried away perhaps to hide the tears that came unbidden to my eyes, now the strain of right and duty was over, and my tense nerves had relaxed. So, after a time, I explained the changed situation to my wondering parents and the Murphys, and felt the silent pressure in the hand of the Doctor, that assured me he sympathized with me, and that I was right.

"This is a very romantic affair," declared my mother, "and after his gallant conduct they should be married at once."

So without consulting the parties most interested, I dispatched a messenger for the Notary who attended to our affairs, and gave our servants notice to prepare for the wedding. For some reason I had decided that it should take place that very day. Perhaps I was afraid of myself. I was giving my one love to another.

I found Jean and Marie sitting where I left them, he was contentedly patting her head, and she was smiling.

"I have come to ask a great favor of you two," I said

"It is granted at once Roul," responded Jean.

"And you too Marie?" I asked looking into her brilliant eyes.

"Surely you would not have me disobey Jean already." she answered shyly.

"It has been a long time since there was a wedding at the Chateau. In fact I have never attended such a ceremony, and am anxious to see one, and as I have already received your consent, you two will be married today. I have sent for the Notary. My father will act for you Marie."

So it came about that a very pretty wedding took place that evening. The Doctor and Bridgey, doing duty as Groomsman and Bridesmaid. Our neighbors and tenants had been hurriedly assembled, so the wedding was a great success. And I was glad of it, for it was the first wedding I had ever personally conducted.

Yes I was happy too, and had my share of attention from my mother and foster mother, who stood one on each side of me, and discussed the romantic incidents of my life to the great satisfaction of them both. When together they always spoke of me as our son, or our boy. But when alone, it was always my boy, or my son, but each was determined not to hurt the feelings of the other, for each was mistress of herself.

The LeClaires were of the better class of tradespeople, and I now found myself master of ten thousand Francs annually, and a fine little estate near Attigny.

We accompanied Jean and Marie home to the Montessor estate, and a week later the Doctor, his wife, and myself were in Paris again. Dear old Paris. That city of strategy and diplomacy. The refuge of the deceitful, and the home of the true. The home of the sinner and the abiding place of the saint, all kinds and classes find a welcome here, here all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people meet on a common level, save the few who choose to erect the barrier of aristocracy around them, and live for themselves and their fancied supremacy alone.

I can hardly describe my feelings as I once again

knocked at the door of the Duchess D'Mendon, my father who was well acquainted with all the aristocracy of France, had told me her true rank, and I no longer wondered at her activities in behalf of the Royalists. My disappointment was keen, when the servant told me that she was not at home, I began to think that my interest in her must be annoying to her, and resolved to forget her. But that was easier decided upon, than accomplished, for she had proven herself a friend indeed, and I felt keenly the obligation I was under to her, yet she avoided giving me the opportunity to tell her so.

Pellitier came to meet me as I approached the hotel, and linking his arm in mine walked back with me, he was eager to tell me the news, and I was eager to hear it.

"The first thing I must tell you of Roul, is that Baron Maupin has left the city. He went away the first day he was allowed outside the hospital. The next thing is that you dine at D'Sayers tonight, in company with General Lascelles, who is here to meet you. The next thing is that there has been no suspicious move on the part of the conspirators that I can detect. The death of the man who impersonated the Emperor must have been a severe blow to them. All this and more too was told to me while I was cleaning up a little, and changing my clothes, for I had not went to my hotel before I called on Emilie. But Pellitier is a capitol hand at telling news, all he needs is a smile or a nod of the head to encourage him.

We had dressed early, and had lighted our pipes to pass away the time, when the name of General Lascelles was announced, and a moment later I was shaking hands with my old commander. I have no intention to describe our greeting of each other. We were always good friends. But when our pipes had been relighted he began.

"No Roul, Henri, Mon Dieu, you will excuse me. I have heard the wonderful story from the lips of our good friends the Doctor and his wife. They have a way of telling it too, Roul, that is peculiarly their own."

"Did they tell it to the others?" I inquired. For I was annoyed to think of so much notoriety.

"No Roul, Henri, Mon Dieu. youu will excuse me."

"It makes not the slightest difference General. Just call me whatever you think of first."

"After all, it was an old attachment and you did the right thing, but we had planned to give you a fine bridal tour. Of course that is out of the question now my boy, but the trip still remains to be taken, and you are the man selected."

"Selected for a journey? You bewilder me General."

"Well then Roul, you have been selected to perform a duty of great importance in America. The same conditions are now imposed on you that were first imposed, when you became the messenger of Napoleon. Your duties here seem to be finished, and I hope that you may be as successful across the ocean as you were here."

"You will select the party you desire to accompany you, of not more than five people, and be on board the convoy that sails next Monday. Read these instructions after you have been at least a week at sea, and do your best to fulfill the conditions imposed on you."

He handed me a long envelope, that was sealed with the private seal of the Emperor, and as I took it in my hand Pellitier arose making a military salute and said:

"I want to be the first volunteer to accompany you."

I took his hand in mine, and held it for a while, at the same time speaking to the General.

"I will deliver the message General, and at the same time do as it directs. There is nothing to prevent my starting next Monday, so you may tell me what preparations I must make, as we walk to the Chateau D' Sayre. The Count will delay his dinner for us, so we should be on time."

D'Sayre, who had been watching for us, met us at the door. There was quite a number of visitors present when we arrived, but my closest scrutiny failed to detect any-

one against whom I had the slightest suspicion. I was sure now that the Countess had changed her ways, and I was delighted, when a few moments after leaving the banquet room, she met me in the lobby and offered me her hand, and smiling brightly looked me in the eye.

"Count LeClaire, You have indeed been a true friend to me. You were the first person to teach me my duty. Others flattered and coaxed me. Some even threatened. So I joined them. I know I was base to conspire against my husband, yet they told me they would not injure him. But I am loyal and devoted to him now, thanks to you."

I chanced to look toward an alcove not three feet distant, and saw the portiers moving, then the face of D'Sayre appeared for an instant, and the curtains closed. Pretending not to see him I answered.

"But Countess, you would have made that change if I had not interfered. Your heart would not let it be otherwise. The Count loves you, you could not help loving him."

"I do love him, devotedly, now since you showed me the enormity of my crime. Do not forget to waltz with me tonight," and tapping me lightly with her fan she moved away.

I stood looking after her, forgetting everything else for the moment but a feeling of delight at her reclamation. A hand was laid on my shoulder and I turned to meet the Count. I could see that he was greatly excited, but did not speak to me for a-some-thing. I could not tell what, seemed to prevent the sound leaving his lips. He put his arm around my shoulders, and led me to his private office.

"You are the best friend I have ever known," he began in a voice that trembled with emotion. "You not only saved my life when threatened by a bully, but also that which is dearer far than life to me. My honor."

"Not so bad as that Count. I assure you that your honor was not the stake they played for, and your wife

never contemplated that sacrifice, although she has been under a mysterious influence exerted by one of them. I believe that influence, was mind control, and that this influence ceased to exist at the time the man she knew as the General passed from this earth."

"And would you hold her blameless?"

"I would Count, yes indeed I would, you know that you were induced to challenge the Baron Maupin, then agreed to meet him with his favorite weapon."

"It was a quarrel I could not avoid, My manhood, my reputation, everything was at stake."

"No Count, there was nothing at stake but you were led to believe there was. This was also true of your wife, she obeyed the will of others, and was powerless to resist, until I interfered in her behalf."

"I have brought you here General, that I might fulfill a duty imposed on me some time ago, and at the same time to confer the greatest honor on you it is possible for me to bestow. However I leave you entirely free in the matter, you are under no obligations of any kind to us."

"I am not one who values lightly any confidence reposed in me, nor the man who will accept more than I may be privileged to return, proceed Count."

"I have two friends in America, also one in France. When we were boys in school, we pledged our loyalty to each other. This pledge we extended to include the three best friends of each member of the original four, and to include in all sixteen members whom the original four are in honor bound to protect and assist, whenever, or wherever the opportunity presents itself to do so. We had sixteen emblems made of a curious design, each one of the four being given four of the emblems, agreeing that each would in turn bestow his tokens on his dearest friends of either sex, that the person so favored might receive two of these emblems or tokens, and in turn might bestow it on his best loved friend. It is now my purpose to give you two of these emblems, they fasten to the coat

with a small device like a pin. I now place one of these tokens on your breast, wherever you go keep it there, for my friends are all of good family, and have power and influence wherever they may be. The other one you will place on the breast of your dearest friend, telling that friend of our eternal vow as I have told it to you. It can do no harm, but may be useful to you sometime."

He had drawn a chamois purse from the inner pocket of his waistcoat, and carefully unrolled from folds of silk three tokens—they were indeed beautiful. I had noticed a similar one on his coat but never attached any meaning to it, they were of curious design but very artistic. I saw at once the generous design of the count, he desired to place his friends under obligations to assist me or mine without exacting any promise in return.

"Count I will receive the pin only on one condition."

"And that condition?"

"That I may be obligated the same as the original four, for it is not to my liking to accept all, and give nothing in return."

"That being the case," he replied, at the same time taking one of the pins and handing me another, "You will wear this pin. It has three diamonds, the one set also in its mouth, or bill, is the emblem of authority, for as you see it is the Eagle of France. The person who wears this pin is our recognized commander, and the others must obey him. We cast lots among the four, to see who should appoint our commander, this favor fell to me, but I was not anxious for it; but none of the others wanted the responsibility, I am glad to say that at last I have found someone who is capable and willing to wear it. You are now our chief." He was fastening the pin on my coat when we noticed the Doctor and General Lascelles coming toward us.

"It's fine company you make Roul, hiding yourself from the broad open light of day as if you were afraid of someone, and at least a hundred lights are burning this

very minute for no other purpose than to show you off, and so many young ladies, and old maids too, who are anxious to have a word with you. Besides that, you are keeping the Count from fulfilling his bounden duties as a host."

Reminded in this good natured way of our duties by the Doctor, we entered the ballroom. I was not a finished dancer like most of those present, and when I accidentally overheard two young ladies speaking of their partners, one of them alluded to me as that bear. I broke out laughing to the no small mortification of the young lady, but seeing that I was not offended she playfully tapped me with her fan and said.

"But I like the bear though, and will be pleased to dance with you again."

I offered her my arm gravely, and in a moment was doing my best to lead a cotillion. I confess I would have had greater pleasure in leading a cavalry charge, but my fair companion had fairly trapped me, and I could not retreat with honors.

The joke was freely repeated among the guests to their no small amusement, and I really liked the lady who had the courage to express herself, and the ready wit to redeem her words. And by the way, as she was leaving for home, I had the pleasure of leading her to her carriage, and an invitation to call and see her soon, as she was leaving France in less than a week.

I was awake early next morning and busy writing letters. One to my Parents, informing them of my new appointment and the journey, one to Jean and Marie wishing them joy, and explaining the cause of my sudden departure, and giving them the privilege of going with me.

At about ten o'clock I was again knocking at the door of Emilie D'Mendon's home, and was again told that she had not recovered enough to see her friends, I was vexed at this, although I knew the hour was early for visiting.

I had so much to do in the short time I had left, that

it seemed almost impossible to do it all, and be on board the convoy when it sailed from Havre. To do so I must leave Paris on Saturday night. I had yet two hours before noon, and I could not call on the Empress before two o'clock, so I wrote a note to Emilie telling her of my expected trip to America, of my discovery of the romantic love of Jean and Marie, of my promotion and my parents, in fact of all I could tell to a good friend such as she had been. This took me longer than I expected so I persuaded Pellitier to deliver the letter and went to say good bye to the Empress, wearing for the first time the uniform of my grade.

The Empress received me at once and as I approached her, she extended her hand which I knelt and kissed, and as I arose she exclaimed.

"General, that uniform is very becoming to you."

"Your Majesty, I thank you." I was blushing now, for the ladies of the court gathered around us, likewise a number of officials and officers who were already present.

"But the epaulets, I do not approve of them. Remove them." she directed this command to one of her maids who advanced and deftly detached them. I could not understand the meaning of this but tried to be unconcerned, though trembling with excitement and apprehension. Then another maid stepped up and deftly fastened a pair of engraved and jeweled epauletts upon my shoulders, the gift of the Emperor and Empress.

I was amazed and looked proudly, yet sheepishly, at my ornaments. "By the direction of the Emperor these jewels were prepared for you and it pleases me to place them on the shoulders of a man so loved and trusted by my husband. May you wear them to the honor of yourself and the glory of France."

"Your friend, Madam Murphy, the doctor's wife, was here yesterday, and from her lips I heard the story of your love and sacrifice. You are a noble man, and no wonder the Emperor places such confidence in you. You

have faithfully fulfilled your duties here, but in the strange land you are now going to, remember you are still The Messenger of Napoleon.

Of such incidents as this was the life of the Emperor. Today rewarding the success of one of his favorites and tomorrow punishing severely any man who by any chance was not so fortunate. None too great or none too small to merit alike his favors or frowns, his praises or condemnation. No wonder that he was both loved and feared, at the same time exalted or condemned by the people of the kingdom of France. All this seemed to pass through my mind in an instant as I stood listening to the finely modulated voice of the Empress, and her closing words fell sweetly on my ears a burst of applause awoke me to a realization of what was transpiring.

"Your Majesty, I assure you that in the past I have had but one desire, and for the future have but one hope, that no selfish or unworthy motive will find a lodging place in my heart, but that I may always merit the approval of my country and its ruler."

"Brave, honest heart," she exclaimed, "you will surely win."

Here she extended her hand to me and the audience was over. It was some time before I was able to leave the Palace, so many crowded around me, all eager to view my ornaments and to say the few meaningless words required by the situation.

I hurried at once to the Chateau D'Sayre where I knew true hearts would rejoice with me, and warm, loving friends would share my happiness. Nor was I mistaken, for after I had told them of the incident, that impulsive Irish woman threw her arms around my neck and kissed me. The Countess, not to be outdone, repeated the operation, while the Doctor and the Count laughed heartily at my appearance.

"Just look at him blushing, as if he was ashamed to be kissed by the two finest women in France. I am afraid

that one or the other, or both of the husbands of these two ladies will have to call you out some time, Roul."

The Count now pleading a private excuse led me to his office, where he gave me further instructions regarding the circle of sixteen, of which I was now the Chief, and although I attached but very little, if any, importance to it then, it was destined to play a very important part in my future life.

"I called to say that I will leave here Saturday afternoon, as I have a great deal to do before I leave you."

"Leave us!" exclaimed the Doctor, what a silly notion is in your head now, Roul. Sure we, Bridgie and myself, are going with you. Why man, you need a guardian, so you do, to talk that way to your betters.

I was delighted to hear this, for there was a bond of affection between Murhpy and myself such as I had never felt for any other man.

The Count agreed to assist us in our preparations, and in a few moments we separated, each to attend to something connected with the journey.

I hurried to my apartments to finish my letter writing, and found a servant from Emilie awaiting me.

"I was ordered to deliver this message into your own hands, and have waited a long time for you," he said, as he handed me a note for which he received a Napoleon and my thanks.

"Wait a moment, there may be an answer," I said, as I tore the covering off the note and read:

"My Dear Captain:

"Please call this evening without fail.

"(Signed) Emilie D'Mendon."

"Tell your Mistress I will not fail," I said, turning to the servant.

Strange what a difference a little thing will make. I never had a musical voice, but for some reason I hummed a song. A love song, too, if I remember rightly, whenever I was not too busy to follow the tune, and I had dressed myself with

great exactness to make this call promptly at eight o'clock.

I had been in the parlor several moments before Emilie entered. She was simply but elegantly dressed, and I noticed that her dress fitted her well up around her throat; also that the sleeves reached a point between her elbow and wrist.

"This is indeed a pleasure, General. I am so glad you called."

"Called," I repeated the word in wonder. "Why I have called every day when I was in the city."

"Yes, but your letter says that you are going away now."

She said this slowly as if measuring her words, and then stopped and looked at me. I dropped my eyes in confusion, for I did not know how she regarded me. She continued speaking:

"I suppose you will not forget your old friends, those that you leave behind you."

"Some of them are too dear to forget, and I have a good memory."

"So I have heard, and a strong arm, too."

The sarcasm in the last part of her speech stung me, and for a moment I was unable to reply.

"Yet no one can accuse me of being the first to pick a quarrel."

"Or first to leave it," she added. "No, General, no one can accuse you of cowardice, but tell me, is it really true?"

Here she paused. I was perplexed and must have looked as I felt, for she continued:

"The wedding of Jean and Marie, are they really married?"

"Yes, they are really married."

I put great emphasis on the word "really" as when she used it she seemed to entertain a doubt.

"It is so romantic!" she exclaimed, "but they were old sweethearts. I knew them both many years ago."

"Yes, it is better so," I agreed, "but it might have been different had I known the truth earlier."

"Do you mean to say that you would have it otherwise?"

"Yes and no, to that," I answered.

I noticed that she had turned her head away from me so that her profile only was visible from where I was sitting.

"How do you mean?"

The question was asked in a voice so low that it scarcely reached my ears.

"Had I known in time we would never have been engaged, and those two loyal hearts would not have suffered as they did."

"Then you never really loved her?"

"But I thought I did, which came very near being the same thing."

"And when do you leave us, General?"

"Tomorrow night."

"Tomorrow night, that is impossible!" she exclaimed quickly. Then her face coloring rapidly, she faltered, "I mean, you will be unable to see your parents by that time."

"They will meet me in Havre."

"But there are so many things one has to do before beginning a journey of that kind."

"All of which have already been attended to."

"Then it only remains for your friends to give you a keepsake and say good-bye. Let me see, what shall I give you?" She paused for a moment. "It is really too bad that I have nothing worth giving that would be prized by a man."

"A picture of yourself," I suggested.

"I had one, but some thief stole it during my illness."

This was said with such evident regret that I could no longer withhold the picture.

"It was I who stole it, forgive me, I could not help it."

"I know it was you. I was in the doorway and saw you take it."

"And you did not interfere?" I questioned.

"Oh, it was hardly worth the trouble, and I consider myself lucky if that is all you stole from me."

"I am not a thief," I said.

"The picture then," she demanded.

"Is here," I replied, and at the same time opening my vest I took it from my inside pocket and handed it to her.

She was greatly excited, and as she turned to me I saw the scar on her beautiful face. The tears were springing to here eyes too as I gazed at the mark which could never be erased.

"I got that for you!" She almost screamed the words. "You big booby, you." Then she burst into a fit of laughing which turned to a flood of tears. Whether she was laughing or crying I did not know, for I had had very little experience with women. I discovered then that they had different ways of making a man feel like a criminal. I was powerless and could do nothing but wipe the perspiration from my face, until she regained control of herself.

"I am angry at myself for what I did, but I return the picture and beg you to forgive me, so let us part as friends."

"Then you do not want the picture?"

"Yes I do," I answered quickly. "That is, I wanted it more than anything I ever saw before."

"Then we will make a fair exchange," she said, pointing at the collar of my coat. "You will keep the picture but in return give me that funny little pin."

"Not this one," I answered, "but I will give you a mate to it."

Then I unrolled the wrapping from the other pin and handed it to her.

"No, I want the one you have worn."

Then seeing that I hesitated, she continued: "Why not give me the one you wear."

"Because others are concerned in its ownership."

Then I told her the story of the Circle of Sixteen. At the conclusion of the story she took the pin in her hand.

"And are you still willing to give me this pin?" she asked earnestly.

"With all my heart."

"Then I accept it in the same manner, and from this hour I will never appear in public unless I wear it."

That being settled to my liking, I replaced the picture in my vest pocket and began to talk of subjects of which we were both interested. It was thus I passed my last evening in Paris, and as I said good-bye to her I knew I had never been so delighted by the conversation of anyone else in all my life.

Next morning my messenger returned with a message from Jean, who felt unable to take the journey at this time, pleading that Marie was far from strong yet, and begging that they be allowed to come as soon as they felt able to do so. At the same time he reminded me of a promise we had made each other some time ago.

Our horses having been sent ahead, it was a happy party of four who leaned far on the outside of the coach to wave a good-bye to the D'Sayres, who had accompanied us to the station.

Sometimes my mind would be recalled to instances of the past few days and I felt, involuntarily, to insure myself that the picture of Emilie D'Mendon was still safe in my pocket.

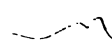
At one of the stations where we stopped to change our horses we heard a great deal of talk about a coach that had already gone ahead. It was chartered by a woman who was anxious to make good time to Havre. Bets were freely offered and taken at the inn regarding her identity. Some said she was a spy of England who had been suspected and knowing that, was fleeing for her life before it was too late. I wondered if my orders had anything to do with her, but my orders were sealed orders, which were to be read only when well at sea.

On our arrival at Havre we were met by my parents and foster mother, who were overjoyed at the good fortune which seemed to linger with me; and although a few tears were shed by the two women who loved me, my father took me by the hand and said:

"It is natural for women to cry, Henri, but men should be of sterner fibre. You are going to a distant land where new friends and new conditions await you and I pray that you may be successful in your mission there. I have watched the development of that new land with an ever increasing wonder. The people are engaged in a great struggle—a struggle for the right as they see it, and I am almost sure that I see eye to eye with them. Think well what you do. Do with your might what you have to do, but do right as your conscience shows you. That is all I have to say. Now may God bless you."

So I went aboard and in a few moments we were moving away from the pier. I had a vague feeling of something I had left undone and was sitting on the after-deck of the ship trying to recall what it was that I had failed to do, when an exclamation from the Doctor drew my attention to the group on shore. I saw my mother standing with her arms around another woman—a woman who had not been one of our party, but we were already too far away to distinguish who it was. Then taking the glasses from the hands of the Doctor, I looked earnestly toward them, for some reason my mother had her arms around the neck of this woman who turned her lovely face to gaze toward our receding ship. As she did so, I felt a surge of emotion pass over me, such as I had never felt and now know that I will never feel again. Then I remembered that two nights ago she had called me a booby, and I was beginning to understand her meaning. Yes, it was Emilie, and an instant's reflection told me that she had made the journey to Havre to say good-bye to me, and had arrived too late. But even that guess was far from the truth, as I discovered it many months afterwards.

A strong wind was blowing and our ship was rapidly leaving the shore. The lights in the harbor were twinkling in the distance, soon to be hidden from our view by the surge of the sea. I could hear the sailors singing some



kind of a ditty as they hoisted more sail and made it fast to the mast, but I gradually lost interest in such things as these and was conscious of a great longing to return to shore. Oh, if the ship would only stop pitching for a moment and give me a little respite I would never trust myself on board a ship again. I had just made this promise to myself for the ninth time when the Doctor approached me.

"Roul, my boy, how are you now?"

"Oh, excellent," I replied, as a flood of bitter memories flooded into my mouth and for a moment held me speechless. Nor was I alone in this, for the Doctor, ever a kind and sympathizing friend, generously undertook to help me and we were both doing our best in a great work when the ship's steward approached and asked us if we would like a cup of coffee. How I hated that steward, and he barely dodged the kick I aimed at him, because I dare not let go of the rope I was holding.

I never will forget that awful night—my first night at sea, and for that matter, the next two or three nights and days. Bridgey was the only one of our party who escaped the general clean-up we received so thanklessly.

On our third day at sea we made an attempt to stay above decks. The Doctor and myself being successful, but Pelltier, poor man, had to go below again where he remained for the best part of a week.

Bridgey, who was a better seaman than either of us, had just brought our pipes and tobacco, and as we watched the rings of smoke rising and dissolving into the air, for the first time since leaving France I told them of my visit to Emilie, not omitting any of the details, while the Doctor looked earnestly at his wife who returned his gaze.

"And do you mean to tell me that she called you a booby, Roul?"

I nodded my head slowly toward them but did not reply in words.

"I believe I would have called you something worse than that had I been in the lady's place."

This speech coming from Bridgey caused the Doctor no end of amusement, and his laughter drew the attention of several officers and ladies who had been promenading the deck in our direction. One of these officers with a young woman leaning on his arm now approached us, a smile of pleasure on her face.

"I knew I could not be mistaken, it is the General I met at D'Sayres."

"It is your dancing bear," I said gravely.

This was too much for her and peal after peal of laughter escaped her, the rest of us joining in her mirth until the Doctor interfered to check her outbursts, which very much resembled Emilie's laugh the night I called to say good-bye to her.

"Roul, you will be the death of some one yet. This girl is in a hysterical condition," commented the Doctor.

However, it took only a short time to check the tears. Tears and laughter at the same time; this seemed a peculiar combination to me.

In a few moments she was able to introduce her brother who were going to America to settle, having purchased a considerable estate in Virginia, and having a military appointment there, he naturally felt proud of his purchase.

It did not take long to become acquainted on board our ship and the weather being fine we had frequent visits from other ships in the fleet, as we sailed together for safety, for England was now at war with the Americans and the Americans had very little friendship for France. So it was deemed advisable for our ships to keep close together.

It was the last of the second week at sea when I opened my orders, and was pleased to know that my duties were of a diplomatic, as well as a military nature; but I will refer to them again for I was very busy just now, there being several very attractive young women on board our ship, also, a few men whom I greatly admired.

Bridgey had taken a great liking to Mlle. Vernet and lost

no opportunity to bring us together, and she was a lovely woman, at least I had formed this opinion of Marcelli Vernet—an opinion I have never had cause to change through all the years that have passed since then.

As a means of passing the time the Doctor formed classes in English, that being the principle language spoken in America, Bridgey and I being assistants; I think I have already mentioned that I speak several languages, so the time passed rapidly and when we sighted land I was almost conscious of a feeling of resentment that our happy party must disband and go our several ways. But the best of friends must part and ours was no exception to the rule. So after many promises had been given to visit our new friends in the strange country, it was with regret that I separated from the Vernets, and I made a resolution then that as soon as possible I would visit them at their home in Virginia.

PART II.—AMERICA.

CHAPTER I.

I had several matters to attend to in Philadelphia before I could finish my journey to Washington, and accepting the strong endorsement of Major Vernet, secured quarters at the Planters Hotel, a place where many public spirited men were always to be found. I secured a nice suite of rooms for the Doctor with a comfortable parlor and reception room, which for lack of others we agreed to share in common, and having decided that Bridgey was a born diplomat, from the manner in which she handled my case with the Vernets, I concluded to give her something to do connected with our mission. So that evening I read them a portion of my orders, as follows:

"And these orders shall be your authority to render such assistance as may be in your power to the American army, or as you may deem advisable, and at the same time using every means at your command to create and foster a spirit of antagonism toward England and favorable to France, the purpose of which is to bring into existence an offensive and defensive alliance between France and America. You are also directed to communicate with August Didier immediately upon your arrival in Philadelphia, who will inform you of the progress already made. If you are successful in this you will merit and receive the further approval of France."

"So it would seem that we are the advance guard of the allied armies, but are forbidden to take any part in the battle," remarked the Doctor after a moment's reflection.

"No, Doctor, that is hardly the way I would interpret it. We are not allowed to enter the ranks of the Americans and fight as Frenchmen but if we have a favorable chance we may do so as Americans."

"I am afraid that you will have some trouble among your forces, General."

Bridgey was smiling as she said this, but I detected a gleam in her eye.

"No, I think not," I answered. "I have proved the loyalty of you all, so we will begin to gather our information tomorrow. We must secure a house and you must become a social leader at once, Madam Murphy, and entertain the good people whose acquaintance we make. That will be your duty tomorrow, using as many of our forces as you may find useful." In answer to this she nodded her head.

"Pellitier will visit the military posts while I will endeavor to meet the men named in my orders. This leaves the Doctor at your disposal," I finished.

"For which I thank you," she answered. "As you have disposed of the forces I shall be satisfied with the Doctor as my Chief of Staff."

I made it a rule that no matter what happened we would allow nothing to prevent our daily practice with arms, for only by practice can perfection be obtained, and Bridgey, under the careful instruction of the Doctor, was now able to split an apple at ten paces with the pistol, aside from that she was now a better swordsman than her husband. "The best man of the two," is what the Doctor said of her. She loved the sport too, for she was a strong and vigorous woman with an eye like an eagle, so I encouraged her to continue to practice.

After our morning exercises, I started for the home of August Didier, resolved not to tell him anything until I

had discovered if possible the character of the man I must co-operate with. So wearing a suit of civilian clothes, without any army rank, I gave the butler who admitted me a card, and in a very short space of time was shaking hands with August Didier, a slender active man of about forty years, who had white hair, almost pure white. I was favorably impressed with his appearance, and guessed at once that the color of his hair was the result of sickness.

"I am a stranger here," I began, "having only arrived yesterday. I beg your pardon for this intrusion."

"Mon Dieu, but you are welcome. Say no more to excuse. Tell me of the Emperor." He paused for an instant, gesticulating with both hands and shoulders. "But you are not an army man, or no, am I mistaken, yes."

His eyes travelling as fast as his tongue, rested for an instant on the pin given me by D'Sayres, then I noticed that he too wore a pin of the circle, and again extended my hand to him, the peculiar pressure and the words we exchanged cemented our friendship.

"Blessed be St. Pierrie," he exclaimed impulsively, "you are our Captain."

His delight was so great that he attempted to kiss me, but by watching carefully I avoided him, and when he had sufficiently recovered, I gave him my letters from the Emperor and from General Lascelles. He was so excited that I was sure he did not know when he opened the letter from Lascelles first. Then again I took part in a remarkable performance. We were seated at opposite sides of a large square table, but scarcely had he read the opening lines of the letter when he sprung to his feet and attempted to embrace me across the table, but after the first scuffle, I discreetly kept outside his reach.

"Mon Dieu, but you are the g-r-e-a-t General. I salute you. My house is your house, no, yes. You shall honor me, no. I am delighted."

It was with great difficulty that he controlled himself and

was able to finish the reading of the letters and orders I gave him.

"This letter from the General Lascelles, say that you bring some very good friends with you, is this yes?" I smiled and nodded my head affirmatively.

"Then they shall here come, and they shall here remain. My house is the big house, magnificent, yes. Pardon mon General, the Madam Didier shall so repeat."

This was said as a lady entering the door advanced toward him and after saluting her affectionately he presented me in a manner so different to what I had expected that he at once won my confidence and regard.

"Permit me Madam, to present the Count LeClaire, who is also the Viscount St. Armand, a very dear friend of mine, yes. He brings letters from friends in France. He is welcome yes, this is Madam Didier, my wife, no."

"The great pleasure is mine, Count. You shall remain here, yes. You must be welcome, yes, yes," said Madam Didier, offering me her hand.

"I have already express the great satisfaction that he shall remain yes, and the great pleasure shall be mine yes, when his friends shall also come." She smiled a smile of real delight, and patted his arm in affectionate freedom as she answered:

"True August, you so, ah what you say? Do not forget, you have the big head, but perhaps in the party of the Count some ladies may be is?" and she looked at me inquiringly as she said this.

"Doctor Murphy and his wife are my assistants," I answered.

"I am so glad yes, I have already my toilet made, for I, we are now ready to accompany you, yes, so that they may be, will be welcome."

There was no resisting the invitation so kindly given. My heart was captured at once by them, and in a few moments we had started our search for the Doctor and Bridgey. I

was sure that he was now doing his best to keep in sight of Madam Murphy, who has an energetic disposition.

As we passed through the city my companions pointed out the places of interest to me, and in their own way gave a very accurate description of the cause of the present war.

"Mon Dieu, but these Americans do fight, they are grand yes. They are sublime, no, magnificent, yes they care not much for life. They art great for fight. Shall the Great Napoleon have America to help him he would soon the world conquer, yes. See, here now comes some men who do not yet know how to fight, recruits they call them, infants, braves, yes indeed, no, it is grand."

I stopped to look in the direction he pointed. A group of men were coming toward us, it could hardly be called marching, the step was so irregular, but the sight was inspiring. The Captain was walking backward, and by the motion of his arms, I could tell that he was explaining the principles of drill to them.

But for a moment I was spellbound. Could I believe my senses, or was this some delusion of my sight, some trick of resemblance. Now their Captain turns his face toward me. "It is Pellitier," I exclaimed in astonishment, "It is Pellitier."

"The Count knows the officer who commands?" enquired Madam.

"Yes Madam, I know him well, but did not expect to see him as he is today."

"Who can resist the appeal to arms in defense of the most sacred rights of man, yes, who is there here who would not gladly take up arms against the English, no? They are the enemies of France, your enemies Count, and mine, yes, no."

Didier said this so impulsively that I laid my hand on his arm to check him. He glanced quickly at my face and smiled, as I said:

"Not so loud my friend, not so loud. Remember we may lose our influence if we betray ourselves. But here comes the rest of my party."

The Doctor and Bridgey had turned the corner at the other end of the square and were now coming toward us, the Doctor wiping the perspiration from his face, but manfully following where Bridgey lead.

"This is the ninth house we have been to since you left us, Roul, and its about time we called out the reserves."

"This is Monsieur and Madam Didier. Doctor and Madam Murphy," was my reply.

"Yes, we have been seeking you to end your troubles, no. You shall come to live with us, yes, yes our home is amply so big so ve-ry big."

This was the speech of Madam Didier to Bridgey, while the Doctor and Didier were shaking hands, and it was warm enough to captivate her hearers.

"There, I knew you were an angel the minute I laid eyes on you, even if you are in bad company at this blessed minute," with a rueful glance at his wife, who smiled sweetly as he wiped his manly face.

Bridgey had discovered Pellitier who was drilling the recruits on the square behind us, and pointed her finger excitedly toward him. The Doctor having his attention called in this manner, stood gazing reflectively, then wiped himself again, as if the act relieved him.

"Tell me, Roul, am I losing my sight, or am I just dreaming, or is it the blackguard Pellitier?"

"See how grand he looks yes, he understands the men, no."

"What does it mean, Roul?"

"I am as greatly puzzled as you are," I answered. But he has discovered us, and is coming this way. It took but a moment to introduce Pellitier, who was smiling broadly as we started for the home of our friends, Madam Didier taking great care to keep up the conversation all the way there.

I gave Pellitier no chance to tell of his experiences, preferring to hear them after lunch, which as I expected, was awaiting us. The happy natures of our host and hostess made us forget everything in the enjoyment of the meal, which they had been careful to order before we started.

"Our servants shall attend to your baggage and portmanteaus," announced Didier. "It will be to them one great pleasure, yes, we have the plenty of accommodation, and it will afford the great satisfaction."

I made a protest against putting him to so much trouble, but at last let him attend to our moving, and in a few minutes we all assembled in the parlor to listen to Pelletier's narrative, he said:

"I was standing in front of the hotel wishing that I had something to do that would interest me, when I was attracted by a number of men who marched toward me. I knew at once that they were not used to drill, but their fine manly appearance won my approval. Standing near me were several men and women, who seemed as much interested as I was, perhaps more so, for they began to applaud the men as they approached us. I saw too, that the man in command of them knew no more than his men did. Turning to one of the men in the group, who seemed to be so friendly with every one, I remarked, 'I wish I had the handling of those men for a while.' "

"Oh you do," he answered, "but perhaps you have seen service and are able to command."

This was said in a tone of voice that reached the ears of those standing near us, and drew their attention to me, just as the company came to a halt before us. Among those who had overheard my words was a tall, young, red-headed woman, who now kept looking at me in a way that made me nervous, so I tried to move away, but was detained by the gentleman, who laid his hand upon my arm in a friendly manner.

"Have you been a soldier?" he asked.

"I have seen service," I answered, thinking that this would end the matter and his interest in me.

"What say you, Nannie?" he demanded, looking at the red-headed girl.

"That it would be a pity not to gratify his desire, and give him something to do," she answered.

Something in her look and words seemed to challenge me, so I saluted her, and stepped into the street followed by the man who motioned for the Captain to advance.

"This man is an experienced soldier, and will instruct you," he said.

The people standing near us, the men in the company, and every person in sight applauded us, and the red-headed woman clapped her hands loudest of all. I had no choice but to lead them away, being directed to the place where I met you by the man who insists that I must dine with himself and niece this evening. "Now, what do you think of my experience," he inquired.

"I think that a red-headed girl has taken your measure already my boy, and that you are a willing captive to one weak patriot."

This answer coming from the Doctor in the funniest strain of which he was capable, set us all laughing. Pellitier laughed too, but he did not laugh as if he enjoyed the joke the same as we did.

"It is grand yes, it is bea-u-tiful. You shall have one lovely wife, and you shall invite the lady of the red hair to our reception tomorrow night, no, I shall attend to that, yes."

"Also you shall invite the uncle, yes," and Didier patted Pellitier approvingly, but receiving now answer, shrugged his shoulders and turned away smiling.

The reception given by the Didiers in our honor was a success. The invitations were written by Bridgely, who delighted in this sort of things. But the addresses were penned by Madam, who was acquainted with the people. Every person who was invited was there some part of the time, and as a result the evening was a pleasant one.

The next six weeks were spent very much the same way, that is to say, enjoying ourselves and getting acquainted.

Pellitier had drilled his company of new recruits, and they had already gone to that part of the country where fighting men were needed. But lately he had begun to be silent re-

garding himself, and it was not often now that he told me anything of his movements. I could see that something was wrong with him, and resolved if possible to set his mind at ease. The weather had now grown extremely cold, and the long hours of the forenoon we always spent in the room we had fitted up as a gymnasium. On the morning in question we were alone, the Doctor not yet having come up. We had enjoyed several contests of skill, for we not only fenced, but delighted to wrestle and spar with each other. In wrestling we were nearly equal, with a little advantage on his side. I resolved to discover the cause of his melancholy, so I said:

"We are alone now, Pellitier. Tell me as a friend what is wrong with you lately. Surely you can trust me."

"Trust you with my life," he exclaimed warmly, "but this is different. You can hardly help me in this." Then he paused thoughtfully.

"Still I wish you would tell me your troubles."

"General, can I, with honor to myself, and without injury to my country, or to you, resign my commission as an officer of France?"

"I have already thought of that Pellitier, and you can. There is nothing to prevent my accepting your resignation at once, to be acted on by the war department when I have forwarded it."

"Then sir, will you relieve me at once?"

"Yes, this instant," was my reply. 'Now tell me as a friend, what is the meaning of this?'

For answer he drew a locket from its hiding place under his vest. This he passed to me. It was a fine face full of character and of soul. I recognized her at once, for I had frequently met the original, Nannie Allen, a relative of one of the men who had fought so bravely in the war of the revolution.

I handed the locket back to him as I seized his good right hand. I could think of nothing to say, but I could sym-

pathize with him, for I too carried the picture of a woman close to my heart.

So he left me that afternoon and joined the American army, receiving an appointment as Captain of a company then being organized, and what was of greater moment to himself, the approval of Nannie Allen who was to conduct his campaign for the rest of his life.

Several times since coming to America I had almost succeeded in forming the alliance so earnestly sought by Napoleon, only to be frustrated by someone or something uncalled for and unexpected. A close study of the situation led me to believe that the Emperor would at once send one of his ablest Generals to America to direct the movement of his troops here, for while the Americans were brave, they lacked the experience in actual warfare; that would insure success to them and for the most part suffered severely because of this inexperience. Had there been a man like Ney, Soult, or Davoust here, then it would have been easier for Napoleon in Europe. The Allies having several times lately defeated us on ground chosen by ourselves. This was nothing to boast of for they greatly outnumbered us, but made the alliance the more desirable. True, England was now engaged in two wars, one with America and one with France; the British forces were divided by the ocean, but it had ever been a favorite method of Napoleon to divide the enemy and beat them in detail, a part at a time. The superior tactics of the Duke of Wellington had avoided many such encounters, he too fighting with his whole strength wherever it was possible. It was with great regret that I read of our reverses and the desperate measures the Emperor had been obliged to resort to in order to continue the war.

The news of our frequent loses had reached America, and materially hindered us in the accomplishment of our plans, although there was a strong sentiment in our favor. This continued to be so until the first of the year, when I re-

ceived a parcel of letters from my friends in France, also information and general orders from the Emperor. For some reason I read the letters first. The one from Paris was as follows:

Paris, France, Nov. 2, 1813.

"Count LeClaire, Philadelphia, U. S. A.

"My Dear Henri:—You are no doubt aware of all the affairs of public interest, but there are a few things of a private nature which you have no way of knowing, unless some one takes the trouble to write of them. So many things can happen in the space of six or seven months, that it is sometimes wonderful to contemplate them. So pardon me my dear Henri, I will now give you the news.

"When the Baron Maupin returned to Paris, which he did at once after you left here, he at once renewed our quarrel, and, profiting by the instruction you gave me, I fired first, but not soon enough to stop his bullet which passed completely through my shoulder, a fair exchange for the one I planted between his eyes.

"I am in love at last. Real love too, Henri, with your mother, who came to visit us with Emilie D'Mendon; they also brought with them that delightful old lady Madam LeClaire, your foster mother. It was most amusing to watch the two old ladies and to note their great love for each other; they seem happy only when together.

"The D'Mendon was with them continually while they were here. She is greatly loved by both the older ladies, and no more like the woman she was before she received that cut on the cheek, (which adds to her beauty) than I am like her. She has forsaken all her political associates, and seems quite content to forget them, and this change came about in the following manner.

"After the affair in the hotel, the one you took part in, she refused to consort with her former friends, some of whom have great influence at Court. So she was charged with being a spy in the employ of Frederick of Prussia, and

evidence was secreted in her room to convict her of the offence. This almost had the desired effect and would have succeeded in destroying her but at last she sent for me. I was convinced of her innocence but saw no way to help her, and said so as I was about to leave her; then I discovered the pin of our circle. My mind was at once made up. I would save her or die with her. She told me you gave it to her, so that made my duty clearer than ever. I hurried to the Emperor, I was always a favorite of his. But when I told him of my mission, he scowled at me, bidding me to take care of myself. 'This woman is a spy, and so shall she suffer.'

"I was almost beside myself, and reckless of consequences, so I continued, 'Yet she is the affianced wife of one of your Majesty's ablest Generals, a man who gladly accepts all odds for your sake, not because you are the Emperor as many do, but because he loves Napoleon.' The look on his face softened at this. 'Of whom do you speak,' he demanded, at the same time he motioned for the Empress to approach.

" 'Roul, Count LeClaire, or Henri St. Armand, whichever your Majesty please. Such men as he are never deceived and never make friends of traitors or foreign spies.'

" 'We may have been deceived in this matter,' he said slowly. 'Some enemy may think to strike the Count through this young woman. Bring her here that we may judge for ourselves. Wait, you remain here, I will send for her.'

"Now came the most anxious hour in all my life. Would she, if questioned on that score, say she was affianced to you? Happily for me a messenger arrived to tell him that the Chamber of Deputies had just voted him another allowance of men and money. So when Emilie arrived he was in rare good humor, and arose to meet her. Leading her to the Empress himself, he gallantly said:

" 'The Count D'Sayre tells us that you are the victim of a base conspiracy. Is this so?' She looked him fearlessly in the eye, and answered:

" 'It is your Majesty.'

"He tells us also that you are a very dear friend of the Count LeClaire. Is this also true?"

"For an instant she tried to control herself, as the color mounted to her face. I could see that he was pleased, and had accepted her confusion as an affirmative answer. So to make sure of it, I pointed to the scar on her face, saying:

" 'She received this scar while defending the Count from a cowardly attack from the rear, while in discharge of his duty to you.'

" 'I heard of that,' exclaimed the Empress, 'it was the grand act of a brave and noble woman.'

" 'I too have heard of it. The charges against you are dismissed. Count, you will see to it that the guilty parties who have conspired against this woman are brought to trial.'

"That very afternoon several people left France for good reasons, and I was so pleased with the result that I took no steps to detain them. Emilie left the palace with a handsome bracelet, the gift of the Empress. The Emperor also pinned the cross of the Legion of Honor on her breast, as a reward for her bravery. So Emilie is greatly changed now. You will pardon me, Roul, for the little deception, it was to save her life, or I would not have used it.

"The Countess (my wife) tells me to tell you that we owe all our happiness to you, and we are very happy, Roul, very happy indeed, and continually pray that you may be successful in America.

"Your friend,
"D'Sayre."

The Doctor and Bridgey entering my room just as I finished reading this letter, I gave it to them, and continued to read the rest of my letters. One from my parents delighted me, but was too sacred to make public. My instructions from the Emperor were short, but concluded with the words, "we feel sure that you will succeed for you have already accomplished much. We regret now that we did not send

you sooner. The inclosed envelope is to be opened when you and those working with you have been successful, and formed the alliance we so much desire.

Napoleon I."

The envelope alluded to was marked, "To be opened when the alliance is formed." I confess that I was curious to know what it contained, but contented myself, being hopeful that some day soon I might read it. I sat thinking of this message for several minutes. How could I hope to secure this alliance, when the ablest diplomats our nation boasted of had failed. Surely the Emperor expected too much from me, but then I reflected, I am only one and there are many working to that end.

"Are you deaf, Roul?"

I started as I heard the Doctor ask this question, and as I turned to give him my attention, he continued:

"D'Sayre is every inch a man, Roul. And there is a party by the name of Murphy who would like to tell it to his face."

"But of course you are not her affianced husband, and he just said that to gain a point, thinking that the end justified the means," said Bridgey, with a dreamy look in her eyes, and I knew that her mind for the moment was with Emilie in France.

"I am thinking that his Satanic Majesty must have been greatly surprised on the day that the Baron Maupin invaded his Kingdom," commented the Doctor.

"Yes," replied his wife. "Yes but then they needed something to use up the sulphur with. It was a lucky thought of D'Sayre to tell the Emperor that she was your affianced wife."

"Yes," I replied, "it was lucky, and I am grateful to D'Sayre for thinking of it. He is very clever, and has helped me to repay her for some things she has suffered through me."

"You mean what she is now ussuffering," broke in the Doctor. "Roul, my boy, that young woman was wiser than I

thought, for she correctly rated you when she called you a booby."

And to show her appreciation of her husband's wit, Bridgey laughed at me.

The affairs mentioned in my letters were weighing on my mind and I was slightly out of humor, so the words and actions of my friends irritated me. Bridgey divining something of my feelings, caught me by the lapels of my coat as I was turning away, and playfully tugging at them, looked up at me, her eyes were moist with some emotion unknown to me, as she exclaimed:

"You are a booby, a great big booby, and I wish that I could shake you."

Then as something of her meaning flashed across my mind, I stooped and kissed her forehead before I hurried away.

CHAPTER II.

The great and unexpected naval victories of the Americans were a surprise to the whole world. Perhaps none being more surprised than the Americans themselves. These victories were the subject of conversation everywhere, and soon the names of Hull, Perry and McDonough became as famous as any names in the history of the country. Captain Hull had arrived in Boston, bringing in the disabled British ship *Guerrierie*. The news had spread from place to place, and the rejoicing everywhere was general. Bon-fires were kindled, banquets given, and speeches made; every one who had relatives on board the good ship *Constitution* were happy, indeed they had cause to be happy.

We had been invited to one of these banquets, Didier, the Doctor, and myself. We had listened to a speech by one of America's foremost orators and ablest statesman, Henry

Clay of Kentucky. Needless to say that I was thrilled by such eloquence as I had never heard before, and now desired the alliance from an unselfish point of view, for I believed it would be of greater benefit to America than it would be to France. So I worked harder than ever, if that were possible, to secure co-operation of men with influence in public affairs. How often my efforts seemed about to meet with success, my hopes about to be realized, only to fall again, and fill me with the bitterness of defeat.

The Didiers and myself were at a reception one night about the last of January, and as usual the party was at a very high pitch, for many people of influence and means had opposed the war from the beginning. Some had made a fortune under British rule, and the temptation of a title of nobility, which was freely hinted at, caused them to do everything in their power to assist the British, as long as it did not result in their arrest for treason. Others still, bitterly opposed it, but were loyal to their country and its defenders. So in a mixed company like this it would be unusual if someone did not say something to mar the harmony of the meeting.

The dining room was long with quite a narrow table running the full length of the room, which left but little space behind the chairs. In this room refreshments were served, consisting of wine, cake, coffee, and sandwiches of different kinds. Some of the men had visited this room several times, and it being very good wine, it began to have an influence on some of their actions. My friend and I had just been led inside the room by our hostess, and were raising our glasses to our lips, when someone rapped on the table with his knuckles, and having secured attention, proposed a toast.

"Here's to the success of the American army and navy," this was greeted with cheers, but he continued, "and to the speedy downfall of Napoleon."

Didier who was next to me started toward the speaker, but I restrained him by a gentle tug on his coat. Many of

those present knowing that we were Frenchmen, did not drink the toast out of consideration for us, others did not drink because the rest refused to do so. Many covert glances were cast in our direction, and knowing that something was expected of us I arose.

"I can heartily say that I honor the sentiment to the success of American arms on land or sea, but as long as England is at war with my country, France, it will prevent her sending here many of the best trained troops in the world to fight against you. Then may Napoleon live, and may your brave defenders win."

This toast was greeted with cheers, and drank by all. Even the man who had taken such pains to insult us, drained his glass. He had already taken too much wine, and I pitied him, for I knew his code of honor would demand a meeting, nor was I mistaken in this, for soon after we had left the table, I was touched lightly on the arm by some one, and turned to meet a man who presented a card.

"I beg your pardon sir," he began, then stopped to wipe his forehead, "but Mr. Watson, you understand, I am his friend."

"You honor me sir. My friend is Monsieur Didier. He is present." Then I crossed the room to appraise Didier of the visitor he was likely to have, and give him a few words of advice regarding the subject.

The remainder of the evening was passed very pleasantly, and it was with reluctance that I entered the carriage to be driven home.

"They are so good people. Yes, I like them ve-ery much. Yes, I have promised them that we will visit tomorrow. Yes, they will something show, I like very much to see," said Madam, but at the same time Didier tapped me lightly with the toe of his shoe, as he replied:

"No, the Count and myself have another engage—yes, we must meet some people at ten o'clock." This was the only reference to the affair which Didier had arranged for ten o'clock the following morning.

I slept soundly that night, and it was almost nine when the Doctor and Didier came to call me, the Doctor favoring me with a singular look, while Didier came eagerly forward.

"You sleep well. Yes, now you shall some coffee take, then we will go."

"Always lucky, Roul. Sure man, you are the envy of my life, and we have just heard that Sandy Watson is an expert with the sword, or what is the same thing, he thinks he is; he has quite a reputation as a wrestler too, and has been taking instructions in fencing, so we expect a very pretty match this morning. But man, you should turn such affairs over to the doctor, for having taken a special course in cutting, the professional man is better qualified for such a job than a mere General, mind that in future."

"I have received a messenger from my friend, Sandy. He express what he call great regret, that he was very much to blame, but he also say, he shall not kill the Frenchy—"

The comical expression on his face as he said this was too much for us, so we burst out laughing, and Didier was in great good humor as he led us to the place selected for the meeting.

A light flaky snow was falling when we left home, in fact, had been falling for some time before we started, and was now several inches deep. How pretty the trees looked as we passed them, the snow clinging to the surface of each bough, seemed to link them together in a panorama of silvery beauty, while above us the reflection of the sun seemed to be trying to penetrate the clouds, to lend still greater enchantment to a scene so fair. The tinkling of sleigh bells reached our ears, and the shrill voice of some boy as he drove past left nothing to be desired. Trees and bushes trimmed and set at regular intervals, showed that the hand of man had been an able assistant to bounteous nature, and together had fashioned this enchanted spot.

Although we were early at the place appointed, my oppon-

ent was already there, and in a short time all formalities had been arranged, so we faced each other. Glancing toward Sandy as he took his sword from the pair that Didier offered him, I saw his hand tremble a little and knew he was just a trifle nervous, but the look in his eye as he faced me told me that he was a brave man, and not afraid to die.

Whether it was his intention to bewilder me or not, I can scarcely say, but the fury of his attack at the beginning of the bout was more than he could sustain, yet I had very little trouble to keep outside of his fence, so let him wear himself out. It was an old trick, a feint, a fierce attack, a side step, a glissade, and he stood disarmed before me.

"You have not learned the proper way to hold your sword, sir," I said this in good humor as I handed his sword to him.

"It looks like you are right, but a man can only die once," he replied, while a ghost of a smile passed over his lips.

"I assure you, sir, that I have not the least intention to become your executioner," I replied.

"Then what the D—— are we fighting for," he demanded without raising his weapon, at the same time casting his eyes first in the direction of Didier, then at the Doctor who was at that instant in the act of lighting his pipe. Then looking at his own second and the Doctor, who showed no signs of great excitement.

"You forget sir, that you were the aggressor," I said quietly. "This is the first affair of this kind I have ever had," he said this hesitatingly.

"And you don't know how far you can go with honor to yourself," I enquired. He nodded his head for answer. Then I continued, "You can retire now with perfect honor to yourself, it would not be a test of bravery to continue; on the contrary, it would be reckless and imprudent, and since you have been once disarmed, you are now really supposed to be dead."

I was smiling as I said this, and the rest of the party

hearing our conversation closed in on us laughing happily at what they considered a serious incident.

"I knew just how this would end," said the Doctor to my late antagonist, as he gripped him by the hand, "for Roul is a gentleman, a regular gentleman, and when it was reported to us this morning that you regretted the affair of last night, and that you had declared that you would not kill the Frenchman, I knew then that if you were injured at all it would be because you lacked good common sense, and I am happy to say that you do not."

Watson now advanced, and holding out his hand to me, a smile on his handsome face, he said, "I had arranged to take my friends to lunch with me, if I could eat at all after this affair was over, for I was unable to eat anything this morning. But you understand sir, after conquering you, as I have done, I will be greatly pleased to have you all join me in doing something I am sure I am your equal at. I am really good at eating."

"Listen to that now, the gentleman has not been informed that after you became a guest of our friend Didier, that it caused a protest to come from his chef and that he was under the necessity of employing extra help in his kitchen."

On our way to the hotel we met several parties who had been present at the reception the night before, who seeing us together at once surmised that something out of common had happened, although it was not uncommon for gentlemen to meet and settle their differences, toe to toe, or at ten paces.

Watson being in a very happy mood, soon gathered quite a number to share our meal, which really was a most enjoyable affair, and a very agreeable party filled their glasses at his request.

"A toast," he cried, "Gentlemen, a toast. I drink to the man who knowing his own strength spares the weak, to the conqueror who is generous, and to the cause of right. To America and every honest heart that beats in sympathy with

our country in its great struggle, be they native born or foreign. Drink to the man who is generous enough to forgive an offense, that sober thought would have prevented. To you sir," pointing to me, "to you and your country."

Many exclamations greeted this speech, and the toast was drank by every one present.

I saw that I was expected to say something, but the personal nature of the closing remarks so embarrassed me that I was at a loss for words; fortunately, or otherwise, the Doctor noticing my delay arose, and clearing his throat with several well directed a-hmes, began to speak.

"In behalf of my friend, who is speechless," here he bowed toward me, "I have pleasure in saying that I have known him for some little time, and that I have never met a man who could lead a cotillion as ably as he can. He is a regular bear." (This reference to a story told by Bridgely to the Didiers, set Didier laughing, and the rest catching the infection from him joined in humorously, without knowing or caring why). A semblance of attention being obtained he continued: "He not only excels in dancing, but I have fought at his side and know what it means to have a friend risk his life to save my own. He excels in the quality of his friendship, and as a lover, well, his greatest victories were won by the bow and arrow of the little man they call Cupid. To look at his modest blushes you would hardly believe my words, well, then, I forgive you for that. Since he came to this glorious country, he has studied every map or book that tells anything about it, and knows the country and your people much better than many of you who were born here, and his sympathies are with you, and for you, and some day, mind you, I do not say that it will be so, but I believe his good sword will be drawn in your defense, and until that good time comes, may you all live long and prosper to your heart's content, and may the sun shine brighter on your glorious flag every day."

A burst of applause greeted this bit of oratory, and amidst

a general handshake the toast was drank. I hardly knew whether to be displeased with the Doctor or not. Some of his remarks were not judicious, but I concluded that they would soon be forgotten, and as lunch was over we returned home in great good humor.

Didier and the Doctor spent the next half hour telling the story of the meeting to the ladies, to the no small amusement of Bridget who greatly enjoyed the manner in which Didier tangled affirmatives and negatives together in his speech.

I had determined to make another trip to Washington, and on my return from there, to visit the Vernets in Virginia, for Philadelphia was the home of some very prominent politicians and had been selected as my headquarters.

Next morning as we were about to begin our practice in the gymnasium, I was informed that Sandy Watson and a friend were in the parlor waiting to see me. I sent them an invitation to come up, and was introduced to Mr. Lee.

"We are just about to begin our regular practice," I said, and I will be pleased to have you remain.

"Nothing would suit us better, in fact, our business here this morning is to beg you to give us instruction in the use of the sword."

"That being the case, I will appoint the Doctor to try you out Mr. Lee; Madam Murphy will give you a test, Mr. Watson."

I noticed a look of surprise on the face of Sandy, and rightly surmised that he did not have a very high opinion of the ability of any woman in that art. He was due to receive a surprise, however, for Bridget also had noticed the look and the smile on her face told me something of what was about to happen to Sandy Watson.

I handed each of our visitors a padded coat, also pads to strap on their legs, but seeing no one of us using them, Sandy seriously objected to their use, although Mr. Lee finally put them on, for he knew nothing at all about the art and was carefully instructed by Murphy; and in the

meantime, Sandy was receiving a most unmerciful beating from Bridgey, but stood gamely to receive his chastisement until I interfered.

"Perhaps you had better put on the pads," I suggested.

"I think I will," he replied humorously, "I think it will be to my advantage to be able to sit down comfortably to-night."

Bridgey had been directing her attack at the place where his pants swelled as they passed over his hips, and wielded her birch stick with malice aforethought, while the Didiers were limbering up. Then I changed opponents, Didier and Sandy, Mme. Didier and Mr. Lee, and while the Doctor and Bridgey rested a few moments, I fired about a dozen shots from my pistols at the targets we had erected for that purpose. Then the Doctor and Bridgey having padded themselves, I faced them, the Doctor fencing carefully, while Bridgey seemed determined to give me all that Sandy had not already taken, so I was forced to hit her several times before she began to behave herself. At the conclusion of the period Sandy advanced and extended his hand, as he exclaimed warmly:

"I am indeed thankful that it was you I met yesterday. There is not one among you whom I could prevent from hitting me at will."

"This is the result of long and careful practice," I answered, "if you continue with us you will be as quick as any of us."

"Then we may come regularly? We may be able to repay you in some manner."

So I arranged the time to suit them, and was right glad to do so, for I soon discovered that both men had considerable influence in politics. Aside from that, they were as the Doctor said, "worth knowing."

Making a friend of Sandy Watson proved to be one of the best things I ever did, and in a short time he became an earnest supporter and advocate of the alliance.

I was sure that this would be agreed upon and entered into during the next three months, in the meantime, there was nothing to do but wait and work for it.

Oh how slowly the time passed, and how earnestly did I meditate on the future, weaving the brightest and rosiest dreams of the days when I was the trusted messenger of Napoleon. I had no selfish motive in any of my acts. Nor did I attribute any to Napoleon, save those which he could not help but feel in the conquest of Europe.

The strain was beginning to have its effect on me, and, acting on the advice of the Doctor, I decided to make my often planned trip to see the Vernets in the first part of March. So after carefully explaining my plans to the Doctor, Didier and Sandy, I started on my journey, riding slowly and studying the country as I went along. I was delighted with the people, the scenery, in fact everything thrilled me, as I became conscious of the great opportunities in this magnificent country.

A very pleasant incident occurred about the middle of the second day of my journey, when I stopped at a farm house to rest my horse and take lunch with the farmer, a big, honest, rugged, good-natured man, who seemed as pleased to see me as if I were his best friend; such was the hospitality for which Virginia was famous.

"You un's don't live 'round here, do you?"

"No, I am from Philidalphia."

"Do you un's b'long thar?"

"No, I am a Frenchman."

With a quick movement of the feet he brought his heels together and raising his hand gave me a military salute.

"I fought with Lafayette," he exclaimed proudly. "Be you un's like he, he shor' was a powerful leader."

The words, the look, and actions of this grand old man impelled me to arise and return the salute. at the same time I offered my hand to him which he grasped with such eagerness that I felt sure his memory had turned back to his boy-

hood days, and in the moment of silence between us, he was listening to the beat of the drum as he followed the Marquis De Lafayette.

"You un's is welcome, you un's is welcome, help yo'self to any thing yo' see, take any thing yo' want; yes sah, take dam nigh every thing if yo' want it." Then he hurried away, his emotion getting the best of him.

I knew that to offer him money for the accommodation he had given me would be to offend him, at the same time I wanted to leave a souvenir of my visit, so taking one of the French coins I usually carried with me, I drilled a hole in it with my pocket knife, returning it to my pocket when he entered the room.

The sweet faced old woman who served lunch proudly told me that she had six sons and two grandsons now with General Harrison, and wished that she had as many more, assuring me that they would all be soldiers.

She came to the door as the farmer led my horse to me; it was then I decided what to do. So asking for a piece of cord, I passed it through the hole in the coin and dropped it around her neck.

"This to you both is a token of my regard," I said as I mounted my horse and rode away.

I had turned in my saddle to wave a last farewell to them and I was delighted with the picture, the old man stood with his arm around her waist, and together they waived me Godspeed. The sight recalled another scene in France, and unconsciously I raised my hand to wipe away the mist that gathered in my eyes, when my horse suddenly reared backward. So quick was this movement that I nearly pitched over his head, but recovering my balance, I saw that my bridle lines were firmly held by two British soldiers, while several more were just stepping into view from the brush that lined the roadside.

"You are our prisoner," said an officer, now coming into view.

"There is some mistake here," I said, addressing a young Lieutenant whom I discovered to be in command.

"No sire, you are the man we want. We have information regarding your movements since you left Philadelphia. Kindly accompany us, to attempt escape means death."

There was nothing I could do only suffer them to lead my horse back in the direction of the farm house, the officer in command leading the way to the front door. He entered and signaled for me to follow him. A moment later I could see the guards at each of the windows, and knew they had picketed my quarters.

I was glad that I carried no papers of any kind, and felt sure that I would be allowed to proceed as soon as the rest of the troops arrived, and the commanding officer had an opportunity to investigate. It was about dark when they did arrive, and then I was told that I was accused of being a spy of Napoleon, and that I was to be taken to the headquarters of General Riall. Although they allowed me the freedom of the large dining room, my hands were securely fastened behind me. Several officers were constantly present awaiting the supper the farmer's wife was preparing for them.

Outside the men, numbering about fifty, were enjoying themselves to their entire satisfaction. They had discovered the farmer's still, and what was more to their liking, about a dozen barrels of good old corn whiskey. The officers did not deem it worth while to interfere with the pleasure of the men, as they would not break camp until morning.

I had seen nothing of the farmer, and rightly guessed that he had hidden away at our approach. The old lady was in a very happy frame of mind, for as she passed back and forth between the dining room and kitchen, she was always singing verses of nursery rhymes.

"I wish that woman would stop that infernal droning," testily exclaimed the Lieutenant who arrested me.

"Oh, leave her alone," replied another, "she is old and

childish and sings to amuse herself. I warrant you will enjoy the meal she prepares for us."

Still she kept singing her ditties as if the sound of her own voice was all the sound she desired to hear. It was quite dark when she lit the candles and began to set the table. The officers now seeing that the meal would soon be prepared, began to get ready for it. Unbuckling their belts, they laid their weapons on a stand near the window. One of them, turning to me said:

"If you will give us your word not to try to escape, we will loosen your hands."

I was about to answer in the affirmative when the old lady passed me singing, "Swords and pistols on the shelf, um-hum-ha are on the shelf." At the same time she eyed me, unnoticed by them. She glanced toward the pile of weapons; something in her manner decided me, so I sweetly answered:

"No sir. As much as you appreciate my company, I promise to leave yours at the very first opportunity."

A burst of laughter greeted this speech, and they began to take their places at the table.

Again the old lady entered the room, carrying the food and singing.

"Just down the lane by the old pear tree, a horse and saddle is waiting for thee, um-hum-ha, waiting for thee."

Then as she turned toward the kitchen I noticed that she carried a big knife. Her lips seemed to frame the single word, "Wait." Then with a stroke of the knife she cut the rope that bound my hands; this was accomplished with scarcely a pause in her walk. Now she returned with a large bowl of soup, leaning over the table to set it down, the bowl slipped from her fingers and the contents falling over the candles, left the room in darkness. At that instant I started toward the door, and felt myself dragged by a small hand that took hold of mine, and led me out of a side door into the open air.

"This way quick sir," exclaimed a boy's voice, and darted away, just as a shout from the inside announced that my escape had been discovered. We had gone but a short distance when I discovered three horses, and rightly surmised that they were there to assist in my escape. In less time than it takes to tell it, we had mounted and were riding away as fast as three good horses could carry us. The sound of the horses feet drew a volley of shots in our direction, but as most of the troopers and some of the officers were unable to take much part in this, for all had sampled the farmer's product, we continued our journey with no pursuit, as they did not think it safe to follow. This was afterwards told us by the farmer's wife, who heard their conversation.

I had discovered that it was the farmer who rode one of the horses, and a little later he introduced his grandson, a bright active boy of twelve years, who had selected Marcus, my own horse, for me to ride. The boy laughed gleefully as he complimented the singing of his grandmother.

"That is her old trick," replied the farmer. "When she was a young woman she saved me in about the same way she saved you tonight."

We were riding slowly now and as there were no sounds of pursuit the farmer told me how they had planned my rescue; he had little trouble getting the horses from the stable, nearly all the soldiers being too busy just then to notice this; no pickets had been posted at the stable, in fact, no guards set away from the house.

The farmer and his wife had laid their plans when they saw me taken prisoner, and had used the boy as a messenger, the lad had been coming on a visit to his grandparents. It took longer to tell the story than I take to write it, and by the time it was told we had arrived at the home of the boy's parents. And soon we were seated at one of the best meals I had ever eaten, and I greatly admired a kind of bread made from corn, baked in a flat pan,

with plenty of good syrup. I confess that this meal, and my present company, were preferable to that which I had left behind.

The boy who had assisted in my rescue was a bright and intelligent boy, with a ready wit, and a manly answer for everything I said to him. His ambition to be a lawyer pleased me, so I gave him a cheque for five hundred dollars, to assist him to secure the coveted education.

The good wife was awake early in the morning. I could hear her moving around the kitchen long before daylight. The boy had already brushed and fed my horse, so before sunrise I had bid them good-bye and was once more on my journey to Vernets, where I received a hearty welcome, just a little before noon.

"We had began to think you had forgotten us, Count. Do you know how long it has been since we arrived here?" Marcelli enquired.

"Time goes fast when you are busy, and I have been very busy."

"But you should not be so busy that you forget your friends."

"And I did not, as a proof of that, I am here."

"And you are welcome too. There, I will not scold you any more, only you must stay a long time now that you are here."

"I intend to stay a week, so you must put up with me that long."

"That long, a whole week, how could you spare so much time?" she asked sarcastically.

"I can hardly spare the time even now, I am about to accomplish the great work I came here for. But I have worried a great deal, and the Doctor advised me to take this trip."

"I am glad you came, Count, we are having such delightful times here. Now we will have lunch together. My brother will not return until evening and you must prepare

to accompany us to a sorree at the home of our neighbor tonight."

And so the short afternoon passed away in the delightful company of Marcelli, as she pointed from the window the different objects of interest to her. I was becoming greatly interested in Virginia.

So the week passed all too quickly, riding around the country, fishing or hunting as we felt inclined, but always enjoying to the limit of our endurance, the big hearted, open door hospitality of the true Virginians, who never seemed to grow weary of each other, and made life so pleasant for me that I extended my visit several times, until I had spent nearly two whole weeks in the gayest and merriest, the sweetest and happiest pleasures I had ever known; but this was Virginia. But all things must come to an end sometime, and so at last I started on my return journey to Philadelphia, the Vernets riding by my side for several hours. Perhaps I held the hand of Marcelli a little longer than was necessary when I said good-bye, but then she had shown me many wonders in Virginia that I did not know existed any place.

Then I rode on alone, thinking of the many fine traits in the character of my friends. As I neared a turn in the road I looked toward them. They had stopped and were looking in my direction. Lightly I threw them a kiss from my finger tips, and it was answered by Marcelli.

I was riding in the direction of the farmer's home, where I had received such great assistance on my way down, for I was anxious to learn if the British had done any harm to them. The old man was at the wood pile doing some job, and did not see me until I was quite close to him. Then he smiled pleasantly as he came toward me.

"You un's is welcome. Mighty welcome," he exclaimed as he reached for my bridle. "Go inside the house while I look after the hause. Wife'll be glad, powerful glad to see yah."

I saw at once that he had not exaggerated in the least about the feeling of his wife toward me. She saw me approaching the house and came to meet me.

"Well I declaih we un's is mighty glad to welcome you all. Have you had any mo such doins?"

"No indeed mother," I replied, "and I am not anxious to have any. I came this way to thank you for your part in the good work; I am greatly indebted to you."

"Pshaw. Say no moah about it then, we un's were shuah glad to help you all. Come inside an set down sah, all I'll be in in a minnit so I'll jes traipse into th' kitchen. Make you sef perfectly at home, muse yourself, n' I'll set the dinner right smart." So she went into the kitchen just as the farmer entered.

"Well sah," he began, "them red coats behaved like perfect gentlemen the other night. They did that for shuah, they never once for a breath suspected the wife of hepin you out. But then sah, they had been drinking some, an wer'nt hardly 'sponsible fer what they did. They told Mothah, that you mus' a had friends on th' outside, which was a putty good guess I rekon." Here he laughed heartily, and I giving way to the humor of his narrative, could hardly control myself as he continued.

"Well sah, in th' morning, th' Cap'n paid Mandy right smart fer everything they used 'cept th' whiskey, which he said was against th' rules of wah, but he polygized so nicely like, that we un's aint a making any fuss about it, no sah."

"You must allow me to pay for the whiskey." I had hardly said the words when I regretted it, for he jumped to his feet, his face flushing angrily.

"Now by Gad sah, ah aint deseivin that from you all. Ah aint a rich man but ah aint so low down as to take pay foh hepin a friend, no sah, by Gad."

"Listen to me sir," I said firmly. "When I said that I had no notion of paying for it out of my own pocket, but out of money supplied by France for such purposes. I

should have told you so before offering to pay you, for on my word of honor I did not mean to offend you, on the contrary, I only desired that you should not be loser by so much kindness to a stranger."

"Cic-umstances altah cases sah, but don't offah pay what-evvah sah." Then extending his hand he grasped my own; he smiled happily.

"Ah shuah am glad you all nevah meant it."

I spent several hours with the farmer and his wife and learned that they were very well off, having refused an offer of twenty-five thousand dollars for his land and stock. He also made considerable money from his still as he made whiskey on shares for any one who brought the corn, shipping or selling his own share at an agreeable profit.

"We all have shually enjoyed this visit sah, an when you un's come this way again, ah hope you will drop in sah. Come as often as you can sah, stay as long as you please, an do any damn thing you wanto sah."

This warm hearted invitation was still ringing in my ears after I was many miles from the brave old farmer who had risked so much in my behalf.

On the trip down to Virginia, I had carried no weapons of any kind, but before leaving there I had secured two pistols and a sword, for I had discovered that it might be necessary to fight. I knew I was able to run if need be, for my horse, one of the best and swiftest that I had ever owned, I had brought with me from France. Yet I was careful, and continually on the look out for another such ambush, for relying on the state of war that then existed, many bad characters were in the habit of disguising themselves in the uniform of one side or the other and robbing any one so unfortunate as to pass their way.

It was nearly noon of the second day after leaving the Vernets and I expected to reach Philadelphia before dark, so in order to avoid the larger places, I sometimes rode several miles out of my way, but this was in accord with a

plan I had before starting on the trip. I was nearly opposite to the village of Reading when I discovered several men walking in the direction I was following. They wore the uniform of the American troops and were evidently on leave of absence, but as I approached them, I noticed that they did not step like trained men. On the contrary, they moved in a slouchy and indifferent manner such as no man would who had ever attended a single drill.

My suspicions being aroused, I brought my horse to a slow walk and began to study them. It did not take me long to decide that they were soldiers, and well trained too, but for some reason which I was unable to comprehend, were adopting the awkward movements they now showed, perhaps to deceive some person or persons they expected to meet on the way.

Carefully I tested the priming of my pistols, and loosened the sword in its scabbard so that it would not stick if needed. I could see no weapon of any kind among them, but decided that their weapons were concealed for a purpose of their own. Satisfied in my own mind that they were common foot-pads and deserters from the army, I rapidly overtook them only to receive the greatest surprise in all my life.

"Pellitier," I exclaimed, as I jumped from my horse. "Pellitier, what does this mean?"

"Roul, dear old Roul," he muttered as I took him by the hand. Then he staggered and would have fallen had I not clasped my arms around him.

"Roul, dear old Roul." He kept repeating the words but could say nothing more.

"How came he to be in this condition," I enquired of his companions.

"We were prisoners of war, sir, and only escaped this morning. Our Captain here was severely wounded, and two of our number killed before we overpowered the guard who were left in charge of us. For that matter sir, every man

who escaped either had a wound already or received one in the struggle to get away. We are hungry too, sir, and were trying to reach the town over there."

Then this was the reason I had been mistaken in the men. Weak and wounded they were helping each other to safety. Brave men who could live or die only in honor. The spirit of love that binds one true heart to another had kept them together. Pellitier was in a fever and delirious. He recognized me before his senses left him, and kept repeating my name, "Roul, dear old Roul."

Lifting him to the back of my horse, I walked alongside, carefully holding him from falling, and started on our way. As we approached the settlement we were met by a party of young men who appeared to be well mounted. I enquired the way to the Doctor's house, and being informed that there was no Doctor nearer than Philadelphia, I called for a volunteer to go for Murphy, and in an instant a young lad riding a powerful black horse rode up to me.

I wrote a note to the Doctor, also his address, and an instant later saw the rider dash rapidly away. Three others of the party now dismounted and placing the wounded men on their horses walked along, the others formed an escort for us to the village which we soon reached. There was no lack of nursing there, for at some time in her life, nearly every woman in the place had taken care of some sick or wounded person, and all were anxious to help the men whose story had aroused so much interest.

One of the men who had walked back with us, told me that the entire party had just enlisted for the war, and were then on their way home to say good-bye before entering on active duty.

It was nearly dark when someone called my attention to a carriage that was rapidly approaching. I felt sure that it belonged to the Didiers, but why had the Doctor come that way instead of riding horse-back? It was a light carriage that could be driven very fast, and was coming in a way

that endangered the safety of the wheels. From afar off I could see that it had two occupants, and wondered who the second one could be, but as it drew near I discovered that it was Nannie Allen, Pellitier's red headed sweetheart, who reached the ground before the Doctor could stop the spirited horses he was driving.

"Stop that mad woman, Roul, stop her," he shouted as she tried to pass me and enter the house. I seized her firmly by the hands and said:

"You must wait in this room until the Doctor sees him. You can do no good now, but by being calm you may soon be able to render great assistance. Then the Doctor entered the room I indicated, and leaving Nannie in charge of several women, I also entered the room.

"There is nothing the matter here, Roul. The boy is exhausted and nearly starved, but his wound is not bad, and in less than a week he will be out on doors again, and then, judging from the time I have had today, his real trouble will begin," this with a nod of his head in the direction of Nannie Allen.

Pellitier who had been sleeping, now awoke, and seeing us both at his bedside smiled feebly.

"Say a word if you dare, you blackguard you. Here I have been driving two fine horses to death so I have, just to give you something to eat, and all the time I was driving, some sensible woman was taking good care of you and feeding you like a prince."

"I know," began Pellitier, but the Doctor stopped him with a wave of the hand.

"Be quiet now, and keep still." You can tell us all about it tomorrow.

The woman who had taken care of Pellitier during the day was in the room when the Doctor entered, and remained to learn the result of the examination.

"Did I do the right thing, Doctor," she inquired anxiously. I fed him boiled milk and strained soup, not much at a time, but often.

"You did the best thing that could be done for him at the time. He owes his life to you, but there is a red headed young woman out there in the next room who will contest it if you try to collect the bill."

"Then I'll turn the bill over to her to collect. I have grown up sons of my own."

"Well, well, I never would have thought it of you. You don't look it," was the gallant answer. "Now will you tell the lady to come in?"

Nannie walked up to Pellitier without showing any of the excitement she had been under, stooped over and kissed him several times, then sitting on the edge of the bed, began to stroke his face. The Doctor motioned for me, and we left the room.

"Not a thing can we do there now, just let them alone for a few moments, then send her to bed for a while, for she is almost as sick as he is."

"How did you happen to bring her along?" I asked the question seriously, but he answered humorously:

"How could I help it? She was visiting Bridget and overheard the messenger talking, and that settled it. She was in the coach before I got ready, and just refused to get out, and there she is. I told Bridget to explain the case to her people."

"Now tell me all about our people, Bridget, the Didiers, Sandy, Lee, everyone and everything," I demanded.

"But the first thing is to get something to eat for I think I hear the buttons on my waistcoat playing taps on my backbone, and by your leave I'll wash and be ready for the mess call."

I showed him to the wash room, and returned for Nannie Allen. She had not changed her position, but arose as I entered the room.

"Supper time Nannie. You will have to wash in the wash room, so come along like a good little girl. You can play with your doll tomorrow."

I was quite happy now that Pellitier was safe, for between us there existed a very strong attachment, and of course Nannie understood what I meant, and allowed me to lead her to the dining room.

The Doctor was already the most famous Doctor that had ever visited the town. The dialogue in the sick room had already been told repeatedly, and added to at nearly every telling, and almost the entire village came to see the wonderful Doctor on some pretext or another, for the woman beside being a good nurse was a wonderful talker.

That night I had an experience entirely new to me. A room with a big double bed had been assigned to the Doctor and myself. It was late when we went to bed, joking each other about the situation.

"Roul, if you should happen to feel a smothering sensation and awaken to find my manly arm around your head and shoulders, and your head reclining on a manly breast, for goodness sake make no fuss about it, for it may be one of the little things you will have to get used to."

"And if you feel someone kneeling on your manly breast, and punching your homely face, for goodness sake make no fuss about it," I replied as I tucked the cover well under my chin.

"April showers may be all right in some places, Roul, but if I had never read the Lord's promise to Noah with my own two eyes, I would be outside building an ark this blessed minute."

"And getting thoroughly soaked for being a fool?" I answered.

It was raining outside and I could hear the patter of the drops as they hit the roof with a distinctness and velocity that prevented my going to sleep. For some reason I began to think of France and the dear ones across the ocean. Almost everything that happened since I left them passed through my mind that night. I could see the masts of the ships in the bay, as our coach approached the city of Havre:

I felt the thrill of delight I experienced when our ship moved away from the pier. There stood my parents on the shore waving their farewell salute to me, and a gray haired old woman weeping on the breast of a younger woman; but the wind was blowing in perfect fury around us, and threatened every moment to engulf the frail old hulk to which we clung. I could hear the crashing of spars as they tore loose from their fastenings and were washed overboard by the fury of the waves. I looked toward the shore and saw my dear ones about to be washed into the sea. Then I felt myself floundering in the thick muddy waters of a strange ocean as I vainly tried to go to their assistance; how desperately did I endeavor to go to them through the madly churning waters. I felt myself growing weaker, weaker, sinking, just as someone threw me a line. With a last despairing effort I tried to reach it and—

I was sitting up in bed when I awakened, clutching a large feather pillow the Doctor had thrown at my head. He was standing near the foot of the bed ready to throw the remaining pillow which by impulse I managed to avoid.

"Is it a lunatic you are?" he savagely demanded, but seeing that I showed no further dangerous symptoms he continued, "The rain itself was enough to banish every idea I had of sleeping last night, but when the Banshee seemed to take hold of you it was simply unbearable."

"What time is it, Doctor?"

"Six o'clock, and a fine morning too after the rain; so get up and dress yourself, and we will be in the city in time to attend the May Day festivities, for today is the first of May, and they are going to celebrate in Philadelphia."

The Doctor was right about the condition of Pellitier, and everything being favorable, we made an early start, there being plenty of room in the coach to hold my three friends, I riding my horse alongside.

The road was muddy, but notwithstanding that we made good time and were entering the city before ten o'clock.

The sun was shining brightly, and along the streets we could see gay groups of happy smiling children dressed in their best clothing, ready to enjoy the holiday and crown their Queen of May.

"Look at that, Roul. Not everybody gets such a welcome as you will this morning. See there is Sandy, and Lee, and Didier, and the ladies all waiting to welcome you."

This was true so far as the Doctor had said. They were awaiting my coming, but I noticed a strange quietness about the group that filled me with apprehension, so after greeting them, I began to joke about their strange quietness and solemn appearance.

"What is the matter with you folks, are you getting ready to go to a funeral, or is it the way people look when they celebrate the first of May?"

"Then you have not heard the news," inquired Sandy, as Bridgey crossed and put her arms around the Doctor's neck. Pellitier and Nannie stood near them, while Didier and his wife stood looking fixedly at nothing.

"I have just arrived and have heard nothing that would warrant your gloomy looks."

"Napoleon," he said, then stopped as I clutched him by the arm, "has surrendered," he continued.

There may be times in the life of man when it is possible to feel as I felt then, but I never expect to see another in all my life so dark and dismal as that moment was. Everything blurred before me, and I could feel a sharp, shooting pain in the region of my heart. My breath seemed to leave me for an instant, but I felt Didier and Sandy leading me to a seat, as I began to recover my wandering senses.

"Rest yourself my dear friend, this has been a severe blow to us all, but one that is inseparable from the fortunes of war."

It was Didier who spoke. I glanced toward the Doctor, wondering why he did not come to my assistance, and could

tell by the convulsive movement of his shoulders that he too had been unmanned by the sudden exposure of this great calamity. With an effort I arose and crossed the porch toward him, and passing my arm around him, we entered the house together. It was several hours before we came down stairs again, and found that lunch had been postponed until we were able to come down, or at least until we had time to take a more hopeful view of the situation. But after that first spell of anguish, we were the better fitted to do our duty as we saw and understood it.

Among my letters was one from D'Sayre, also one from General Lascelles, telling me of our bitter defeat. Also a kind and loving letter from my parents telling me how glad they would be to welcome me home.

"You might as well read the sealed orders from the Emperor now," remarked the Doctor, "it can do no harm if it does no good." So I hurried upstairs, returning with the letter in my hand, just as Sandy Watson and Mr. Lee entered the parlor.

"Too bad Count that this happened just as it did. In two weeks more we might have been successful and effected the alliance, but this defeats all our plans; I sympathize with you."

"I am beginning to take a more hopeful view of the case," I replied. "After all it was my country I served, although a messenger of Napoleon. But there are the sealed orders, Doctor, there is no one here but those we trust. Read them aloud."

Braking the seal he carefully unfolded the paper, and read slowly:

Headquarters Army of France,

To Whom it May Concern, Greeting:

This certifies that having special confidence in the integrity and ability of Count LeClaire, General of Division in the army of France, we do hereby authorize and empower

him to organize armies in our name, and to lead and direct the movements of all our troops that may now be in America, or that may be sent there hereafter.

(Signed) Napoleon I.

A tense silence reigned as the Doctor raised the second letter, but as he glanced over the headlines he handed it to me.

"This is the Emperor's own handwriting, and looks more like a letter to a friend, better read it privately, Roul."

I was glad afterwards that the Doctor showed such good judgment for confidences were contained in it that I would not have exposed for anything.

"So it was only by the narrowest margin that you escaped a greater honor than Napoleon ever gave to any man before, Roul. But somehow I believed it was so all the time," was the comment of the Doctor.

Didier crossed, and laying his hand on my shoulder patted me affectionately. "You are the great man, Napoleon will trust no other. You are my friend, yes. My very good friend."

Impulsively I squeezed his hand but said nothing as Sandy and Lee now approached us. Of my titles they had been informed, but the knowledge of my rank in the army had been kept a secret, and came as a great surprise to them. They now expressed the greatest sympathy for me, and invited us all to attend a public meeting with them that night. I agreed to this, as it would help dispell some of the gloom I felt. Pellitier had gone to the home of the Allens soon after our arrival, so he was in good company, and in no danger.

Everyone around the house seemed to want to be alone, this was exactly my desire at any rate, so I went back to my room, and throwing myself on the bed tried to reason out the cause of my failure. But was it my fault? I had done all a man could do. More than some who had been

diplomats all their lives had done, and only failed because of the failure of Napoleon himself. This thought gave me great consolation. Oh you giddy bauble of reputation ever elusive as a will-o-the-wisp, one moment you seem to crown a man with laurels and the next you rend him with a wreath of thorns and leave him in the very blackest of despair. See how the mighty fall under your fell stroke, only a short time ago, and Kings and Rulers trembled at his word, now they jeer at him, he is harmless they say, he is harmless. Then as I thought of my dreams last night, my mind seethed again with activity. "Fool that I was," I exclaimed, "it was the picture of France, my country, trembling from the blow that laid our colors low."

Once again I read the letter from the Emperor, and as I did so another thought occurred to me. He was one of the original four, he is one of the sixteen. It was Napoleon who had selected me, and instigated D'Sayre to appoint me chief of the Mystic Circle. Just as I arrived at this conclusion Didier entered the room.

"Count, no, General yes, no," he began as if in doubt which of my titles to use, and which I desired should be given preference.

"Henri to Didier," I answered. "The Doctor calls me Roul, but he began to call me that before he knew I had another name, so Didier, we will omit the title among friends such as you and I."

"I am delighted, yes Henri. Since you have gone to Virginia I have bought a plantation in the beautiful state of Alabama, yes. The grand plantation, (with his beautiful lingering sound of the word plantation) I am delighted. Now you may come to me, yes, yes. It is many acres, so you may hunt and fish all the time."

"Good," I exclaimed, "I am glad of that. Land will grow in value day after day, no matter where it is in this great country. I am so sure of this that I have been seriously thinking of purchasing some myself."

"I am delight to hear you say so, yes, you shall tell that to Madam Didier. She is not so delight as I, no. But the dinner is now Henri, we will go." Then linking his arm in mine, we descended to the dining room together, where we found the others waiting for us. As we seated ourselves at the table the Doctor looked at me for an instant and inquired:

"What do you think of our friend Didier's investment, Roul?"

"I think it is the best thing he could do, in fact, if a favorable opportunity presents itself, I am inclined to do likewise."

"There August, I am sure it was a mistake, no. When we buy that land, yes it is as I told you so. Good, very good."

Didier favored me with a wink, for Madam had a very peculiar way of speaking about things in general, very much subject to the mood she happened to be in. Her admission at this time being a real triumph of vindication for Didier, that would prevent her sitting up at night just telling him about his investment.

"I was thinking too, Roul, that now since Napoleon—that under the present condition of things," he corrected, "I now find myself in the peculiar situation of being a man without a country; our little estate in Ireland will never amount to anything, and I have some money to invest."

"The very thing," I exclaimed. "Invest it here, and if you need more money—"

"There you go again, Roul. No my boy, I have all the money we need, but Bridgey and I have talked the matter over and decided to settle down some place. I hate to think of leaving you, Roul, but the fates themselves seem to take a hand in this. You will soon return to France."

"Or to Virginia," exclaimed Bridgey, maliciously.

I was conscious of considerable embarrassment at her remark, but let it pass unchallenged.

"And settle down with your people," continued the Doctor, "for there are two women over there who would give their heart's blood for you."

"Three of them; one called him a booby, though."

And Bridgey laughed at her own wit. I could see nothing funny in what she said, but then I had very little experience with women and did not understand them very well.

"Bridgey, if you don't be quiet and let me do the talking as long as my breath lasts, something terrible is going to happen to you, mind what I tell you now," exclaimed the Doctor.

"If the Madam Murphy will tell me why she say so, I am so what stupid too, perhaps I may also laugh, yes; perhaps there is the great romance," and Madam Didier arched her eyebrows enquiringly.

"No," replied Bridgey, "just a joke."

Madam Didier gave a shake to her pretty shoulders, and turning to me shook her finger warningly. "You shall confess to me, yes; I have the great desire romantique."

"Have you found some place that pleases you, Doctor?" I asked the question to change the discussion of a subject that was beginning to be a very tender one with me.

"Yes and no. With a little more of the no, than of the yes. But we will talk it over tomorrow, Roul, then I may know something about it myself. Pass the butter, Bridgey."

"Please don't bother about the butter," she replied, at the same time complying with the request. "Just eat what you have stacked up before you."

I could easily see that the gaiety of their manner was assumed for my benefit, for well I knew that the Doctor keenly felt the reverse in the fortunes of that man who like a star of stellar magnitude had suddenly appeared in the horizon of Europe, mounting higher and higher, until all other stars appeared to be of lesser light compared with the one brilliant luminary in the very center of the great blue

canopy of heaven. We both had loved that star, whose glory had so suddenly faded from our sight. The Doctor finding excitement and forgetfulness in following the fortunes of our peerless leader, and I because of the glory he seemed to bestow on my country from the time I could first remember, for my foster father had been a soldier, and I had been taught that it was every man's duty to be a soldier, and that a soldier's duty was to love his country, obey his Captain, and never refuse to fight.

In spite of our attempts to be jolly and make the best of the situation, we left the table in silence, and I was greatly pleased to hear the servant announce Sandy Watson, who had come to escort us to the hall. And in a short time we were listening to one of the finest addresses I have ever listened to.

The speaker outlined the causes of the present war in a masterly manner, paying a glowing tribute to the genius of Napoleon. He declared that this war was waged in support of right and justice on both land and sea, and closed with the declaration that the people of the great state of Pennsylvania would do their full part to maintain this government of the people. As I listened to the impassioned words of the speaker, I felt a strange thrill, rather say a new feeling seemed to inspire me, and I knew that I would gladly give my life in defense of the principles so glowingly described by the speaker; but when he said in that far-reaching and magnetic tone of voice:

"We are now organizing ten new regiments to send to the front and we need your assistance; who will be the first to volunteer, who will be the first man to sign the roll tonight," I was lost in wonder and dimly heard the hum of approving voices as the speaker stopped speaking. Then as a burst of applause reached my ears I recovered my senses and found myself standing at the desk of the enrollment clerk, and by my side, a smile on his manly face, my life long friend, the Doctor. We signed our names and as I turned to grasp

his manly hand, my attention was attracted by Sandy Watson, who jumped on the table and shouted in the enthusiasm of the moment:

"Come on boys, come on, let us follow the example of this man; we are bound to win; this man is a French General, no other than the Count LeClaire, the trusted messenger of Napoleon. Come on, come on."

Jumping from the table he signed his own name, the example being followed by many in the hall. So we became soldiers of the new republic, the land that had adopted us, the land we had adopted.

"What made you do it, Doctor?" I asked the question after we had returned home. And at the same time I watched the smile that still lingered on the lips of his wife, and felt that she was quite happy.

"What made you do it?" I repeated, for he did not answer me.

"Well, it was like this, Roul. When Bridgely placed her two hands on the back of the chair in front of us, then laid her cheek on the back of her hands and looked at me in her peculiar manner, I felt that she was offering me a challenge. Then you, madman that you are, began your advance. So receiving the proper encouragement from you I accepted her challenge and followed you."

A peal of laughter greeted this statement, calling our attention to Madam Murphy. Not having any idea of the cause of her mirth, we waited for it to subside.

"Challenge," she exclaimed. "Why, Roul, I could no more keep him from following you than I can fly. But you should have noticed the Didiers, oh they were too comical for anything," here another peal of laughter, joined in by the rest of us, although to save myself I could not have told why I laughed.

"When you started on your assault, Roul, you looked as if you were going to eat the speaker at once, and as the Doctor followed you, my attention was attracted by August

who jumped to his feet with the evident intention of following you. Emmeline promptly grasped him by the coat tails and jerked him backward, but he jumped up again, only to be jerked down for the second time, this time he failed to locate the chair and went sprawling to the floor." Once more the recollection of the incident was too much for her, and even the Didiers followed in the laugh at the description of their actions.

"In falling he fell with such force that he dislocated some chairs in front of us, which had been vacated by those who followed you. Quick to take advantage of this he crawled between them and then stepping over the backs of the chairs eluded Emmeline, whose attention had been attracted elsewhere for a moment."

"And I too am a soldier, yes," said Didier as he struck his breast proudly with his clenched hand.

I crossed the room and held out my hand to him.

"Welcome to the great army of the living. August you have just began to live."

"I am delighted, yes. You see I am a soldier."

"I too am so greatly pleased. I am not ready yet that he shall go, but it is good, it is grand, I am now resign, yes."

This was accompanied with several expressive shrugs of her shoulders, and Bridgey placed her arm around Madam and led her away just in time to prevent our witnessing a flood of tears that were so very near. In a few moments we all retired, tired out but happier than I thought I could be at the close of such a wonderfully eventful day.

CHAPTER III.

The next week was a very busy week for us all; the officers had not yet arrived to take charge of the regiment

of volunteers of which we were a part. True we had not been mustered into the service, and no company had yet been recruited to its full strength of men, but we were growing stronger every day. From the first morning I had accepted the task of drilling the men, using sticks instead of muskets, and cart wheels instead of cannon, so that when at last our arms arrived, which they did two days ahead of our officers, the men were in fairly good condition to turn over to them.

The Doctor had been a valuable assistant in this, and together we conducted a school for non-commissioned officers, and it was quite astonishing how quickly they grasped the rudiments of drill, although they had very little to learn about firearms, many of them being marksmen of ability, who could hit a hawk flying so far above us that the shot seemed simply impossible to make.

Since the night when we enlisted I had not seen Sandy Watson, but felt sure that he would be on hand when the regiment left the city, but he had a great many things to attend to before he was in a position to leave Philadelphia.

We had received notice that we would be mustered into the service at two o'clock that day, and I marched the men onto the square to await the arrival of the officers who would be assigned to them. Yes, I had good reason to be proud of such men as were temporarily under my command. Men, women and children crowded on the square to witness the ceremony, for among them were many from the best families in the state.

A buzz of excitement announced the approach of the expected party. They had entered the square at the right and were walking down the line of men toward the place where I stood. It was then for the first time I discovered the missing Sandy, and at his side my old friend, Pellitier. As he advanced to the place where I was standing, Pellitier extended his hand to me, then offered me a paper.

"Read it for me," he whispered.

I have had many pleasant duties connected with my army life, but none that gave me such pleasure as the reading of the document appointing Pierrie Pellitier as Colonel of the —th Pennsylvania.

As I finished reading the paper, Sandy Watson now approached and handed me a bunch of papers, and so I read the appointment of Sandy Watson Captain of Company A, Archibald Lee assigned to Company B, August Didier to Company C, J. C. Aiken to Company D, George D. Aiken to Company E, Fred Littlejohn Company F, Gerry Ingalls Company G, Hans Snyder Company H, Walt Allen Company I, Ed Clark Company J, Peter King Company K, Albert Ellsler Company L, and last but not least the commission of Doctor Murphy as Surgeon Major of the —th Pennsylvania. Each Captain now read the commission of his lieutenants, and announced that the appointments of non-commissioned officers would be made later.

I had saluted Colonel Pellitier and was about to take my place in the line, but was halted by a burst of cheers as a number of ladies and gentlemen now approached us from the end of the line. Among them I noticed Madam Didier, Bridgey, and Nannie Allen, who was manfully carrying a large flag, the wind blowing in our direction kept it floating almost straight along the line. Another lady carried a flag intended for our regimental flag. The people who now surrounded us kept up their cheering until one of the ladies raising her hand intimated her desire to be heard. At the same time I motioned to Captain Watson for a file of men to receive the flag.

I have always regretted that I was unable to make a record of the speech made by that energetic little woman. It was a masterpiece of oratory. Her closing words, the grandest I have ever heard, "These flags should remind you of your mother, sister, daughter, or wife, and should recall the woman who is dearest of all on earth to you, the girl who loves and trusts you, the true woman who honors the brave

will hang her head in shame if a coward is found among your ranks; but there is none. So we present these emblems of freedom, knowing that you will bring them back again, soiled perhaps, by the stains of travel and of war, but without a stain of dishonor on their lovely folds."

To one not accustomed to military life, perhaps this speech would have no meaning, but to the soldier's heart it was an inspiration, an appeal, and a command, that would be answered at the very mouth of the cannon.

The applause was still ringing in my ears, as she stepped back among the women and made way for the appearance of a man who had marched among them. All the applause that had been so freely given during the afternoon was nothing to that which now greeted the appearance of this man. The cry of, "Andrew Jackson, Old Hickory," was simply deafening, and it was some moments before the noise abated so that he could be heard.

"You all know me, and know full well that I am no orator, and but little used to public speaking. But having a duty to perform, I will try in this to follow my rule. That is, to do the best I can. You have a right to feel proud of the regiment we have just mustered into the service. This regiment becomes a part of my command. That is enough on that score. The splendid organization and discipline of this body of men is mainly the work of one man. A man trusted to the greatest extent by that great military leader of France, Napoleon. We can offer him no new honors, but in behalf of the President of the United States, I ask him to retain those he has already won, and the great state of Pennsylvania presents this sword, by the hand of a lovely woman, born and raised in his native land."

A burst of cheers greeted this speech, and continued as Madam Didier advanced carrying a sword and belt. The handle was of solid silver, and trimmed with a bunch of red, white and blue ribbons. The cheers continued as she unbuckled the belt I wore and buckled the new belt around me.

In fact I was not conscious of any abatement of the noise, so to screen myself from the sight of the people I tried to hide among the group of ladies and gentlemen who were standing near the General. This proved ineffective, for the ladies impulsively pushed me forward, as cries of speech were heard from many parts of the square.

I could not speak a word at that moment even if an empire depended upon it. I was cowed and abashed to such an extent that I felt like taking to my heels and running away. At last after what seemed an age to me, I drew the sword and kissed the hilt, just as Nannie Allen, holding a bugle to her lips, advanced from the stand and blew the well known call of retreat. This ambitious young woman, having great talent for music, had learned the calls from Pellitier, and I was grateful for the reinforcements she lent me that day.

Instantly the troops were put in motion, and a swarm of people pushed onto the field, anxious to meet the principles in the events of the day. How proud I was of Pellitier's promotion. Indeed I felt greater satisfaction in this than any of the other acts leading up to it.

"You are directed to report to the Secretary of War at Washington; he will expect you about the first of next week."

I turned to meet General Jackson who had approached unnoticed by me. He extended his hand which I gripped so eagerly that, strong man though he was, he flinched under that grip. I had often heard of this great leader and was delighted to meet him.

"Roul, I want you all to come over to Allen's home tonight, put on your full regimentals too. I mean the uniform of France, for as yet you have none belonging to your new service. You must help me tonight, Roul. General Jackson knows, the Governor of the State will be there and you know. I have been away since I saw you, Roul, and, well—"

"You are going away in two days, and may be gone for some time," said the General pleasantly, slyly poking Pellitier in the ribs.

"Yes that is it. You know what I mean, Roul," then he blushed furiously but continued: "Nannie—that is we—" Then he turned and slashed furiously at some imaginary foe in the air, and succeeded in drawing the attention of several in the group toward himself.

The General smiled at his confusion, but taking me by the arm led me away at the approach of Nannie.

"It seems as though it was a case of love at first sight," explained the General, "but no matter how it happened, it was the means by which we gained the service of an able soldier."

"What do you mean, General?"

"Why your friend and Nannie Allen are to be married tonight. Owing to the early departure of his regiment, the affair has been hurried along, and you are the best man."

I turned to look at Pellitier, and saw him just leaving the square in another direction, and caught sight of Bridgey and Madam Didier, who signalled for us to wait for them.

"It is so romantique, so very romantique, yes. I am *im-presse*," began Madam, who like myself, had just heard the news.

"Roul, you poor boy. We are of the opinion that you will live and die an old maid," said Bridgey. And notwithstanding the utter impossibility of such a calamity befalling me, the General laughed heartily at the speech.

"We shall hurry to dinner, yes. The General Hickory dines with us, it is so. Oh I am so excitement yes, yes."

The General had accepted the pressing invitation of the Didiers and it was a merry party we made, Bridgey taking pains to comment on my lonely condition, and enumerating with exactness the number of my married friends.

Although the wedding had been hurriedly arranged, there was nothing lacking in its detail; perhaps the happiest man

there that night was myself. It had been a bright day in the life of some who were very dear to me.

At the supper table, the witty Governor of the State acted as toastmaster, and it became my duty to offer the toast to the groom. It was the heartfelt toast of a friend, but it paled into insignificance when the Doctor, who had been selected to make the bride's toast, began to speak.

"Since the days of Adam there never has been anything worth while going on this old world of ours unless there was a woman at the bottom of it. And if my recollection don't fail me at this very minute, it was the result of a quarrel over a woman in the Garden of Eden, when Cain killed his brother Abel." (Here he was interrupted by laughing and hand clapping). "And it was a red headed woman at that." The uproar was general by this time, and it was difficult to hear him, but he waited his time, and then continued, "I know this to be a fact, for one of my ancestors cut a curl from her pretty head, that curl descended from sire to son until it came into my possession. I carried it with me for many a day, but at last it was stolen from me, and after a long and careful search I have discovered that it is now wrapped in a little silk bag, and rests near the heart of that man." Here he pointed his finger at Pelitier, whose face seemed about ready to burst, and louder and longer laughter greeted his further efforts.

"But I forgive him for that, forgive him for stealing that lock of hair which I so dearly prized, if he will promise right here and now that the same lock of hair will always be a beacon light to his heart and soul, leading him onward and upward, as it will, in every honest, manly enterprise." Then he turned to Nannie.

"And you, golden haired fairy that you are, may that same red hair never lose a shade of it's heavenly color, but may it always shine as bright as it does tonight, as a beacon light in the harbor of safety for every heart that loves you. May it be an inspiration to your soldier, a joy to your lover,

and a monitor to your husband. May it never grow dim, and may you always be as happy as you are tonight."

I cannot correctly describe the sensation produced by this toast which for laughter, cheers, words of approval, hand shaking and genuine good will had never been equalled in my hearing.

It was now time to retire, and we were endeavoring to bid each other good-bye when the clear silvery voice of Nannie reached our ears, then for the first time I heard the words of that beautiful new song, "The Star Spangled Banner." One by one the different voices took up the strain, and I found myself trying to sing a song that I had never heard before, so great was the effect it had upon those present at the wedding of Nannie Allen.

* * * * *

Acting on the orders given me by General Jackson, I arrived in Washington on the following Monday, and reported directly to the Secretary of War. It was then I learned that I had been appointed as a member of the Board of Strategy, and was warmly welcomed by the President. For that matter, I had no cause to complain of any lack of friendliness in every person I met. A common brotherhood seemed to join all classes together, there was no sign of yielding, no weakness to overcome. Just one grand, firm determination to do or die, but even in dying, to accomplish that upon which they had fixed their hearts. It was the mighty movement of a noble people for independence, an independence they had won years before, but were too weak to take advantage of at that time; and now, in the natural course of events, were fighting to regain and maintain.

During my first two weeks in Washington I was lonely. Some one had said in my hearing, "that a busy life could not be a lonely life," but I was proving the error of that statement every day, and at last concluded that it might be true if the business was congenial, but not otherwise.

I had received a letter from the Doctor, full of life and glowing with good humor, that in a measure reflected the feelings of my friends and made me long to be engaged in more active pursuits, but I will quote a little from his letter.

"And would you believe it, Roul, the boys all act like veterans. Not a faint heart among them. We have had several little skirmishes with the British and the Indians too, but nothing like real war yet, though we hope for a chance soon. Today we had a number of visitors, among them the Vernets. They have known the Lee's for some time and accompanied Miss Lee, who made a pretense of visiting her brother, but spent most of her time with Sandy Watson, who by the bye, has cut off his moustache and looks horrible. If old Tecumseth gets one glimpse of that face it will end the war so far as the red men are concerned. There may be uglier mugs among the British, but I doubt it. And say, Roul, although you may not like to hear it, you have a strong rival for the affections of Marcelli Vernet in the person of one Archibald Lee, a Captain in the American army, who owns a plantation adjoining the Vernet place in Virginia.

"Our only real fight so far was when a party of British attempted to land at Norfolk, Virginia, but got disgusted at the uncivil way we had of receiving them. And by the way, Roul, Old Hickory has a convincing way in such matters. Now hurry and answer this, for I am longing to hear from you, so in fact does everybody else in the bivouac.

"Murphy."

This letter had a good effect on me, and for many days after was often referred to when I had nothing else to do.

I had told Mr. Armstrong of my desire for field duty, and had his assurance that I was only held in reserve and to be ready to go at a moment's notice. There seemed to be nothing for me to do here but move pegs on the maps so as to correctly indicate the position of the contending armies and discuss the probable outcome of the battles, which

occurred frequently enough to keep us guessing and continually moving the pegs.

It was drawing near the end of the month of June when I was called into the private office of the President where several members of his cabinet were already assembled. I could see by their looks that something important had been under discussion.

"General," began Mr. Armstrong, "I have just pledged my word to the President that you can, and will, deliver this package to General Scott within a week. Can you do it?"

"I can and will," I answered.

"Good. How long before you are ready to start?"

"I am ready now sir. My horse is already saddled and waiting for me."

President Madison turned to face me. He was smiling.

"Good," he exclaimed. "Good, sir, you come to this country as a messenger of Napoleon, and I have reason to know how nearly you were successful. You are now about to become a messenger of the United States of America, trusted by their President to the fullest extent. Above all things, these letters must not fall into British hands. Will you deliver them?"

"I will," I answered firmly, as he took the package from the hand of Mr. Armstrong and handed it to me.

It took but a second to secure the package in my pocket, but in doing so the miniature of Emilie was disclosed to view. He smiled as he saw that the picture was that of a young woman, and inquired:

"Your wife, General?"

"No not, no sir," I stammered as he smiled knowingly.

"Good, bring her to Washington when she comes here."

I hurried to the door to get away from him for I could feel the blood rushing to my face, and felt confused at his discovery, and in a few moments had mounted and was riding away from the Capital. The sun was brightly shining and not a stir of wind in the air but the motion of my

THE MESSENGER OF NAPOLEON.

horse kept me from sweating, yet the heat was into I decided to do most of my travelling in the cool hours the day and at night when the heat would not affect horse or man as it did now. So after a ride of several hours I sought the comforting shade of a fine old apple tree in an orchard, and in a very few seconds was busily engaged in a battle royal with gnats and flies. How I did enjoy that skirmish, but finally, they being reinforced with several legions of small mosquitoes, I beat an inglorious retreat, and left them masters of the field.

Now that I was fairly started on my journey, I began to think of my direction and location. The maps in Washington had given me a general idea of all the principle wagon roads, but I knew that there were many short cuts that would save miles of travel and they were not shown on the maps, so I made up my mind to secure the service of a guide if I could find one, which seemed very improbable, as this was the busy season of the year and nearly all the men that were not needed on the farm were already at the front fighting their country's battles.

With this idea in view, I took the road to Pittsburgh and arrived there on the afternoon of the second day. Then after giving directions to the stable boy regarding my horse, I started to find a place where I could get something for myself, having been directed by the stable boy to "The best cooker baker in the state or taoun."

I wonder what is the matter there I muttered, as I noticed a group of men gesticulating and acting in an excited manner and following an impulse I went toward them. As I approached I could hear such comments as "hit him again," "too bad," "the poor fool is drunk," "serves him right for getting drunk." "The poor fool should have a chance any way," said some one near the edge of the crowd.

I was looking between a mass of heads to see what was taking place, when a small man wearing the dress of a quaker elbowed his way among them and seizing one of the

men tried to pull him from the other. In this he was finally successful, for the man on top released his hold of the other and springing to his feet turned to meet the new comer.

"What da yah mean by gittin in hyar, be ya lackin' sense, ya need a taste of th' same med'cne, hay?"

"Thee is wrong brother, the poor Philistine is unable to injure thee, yea, verily, he is in a state of almost helplessness."

I glanced at the other man who had been engaged in the scuffle and saw that he was just assuming a sitting position, his actions showing plainly that he was under the influence of liquor.

"If thee art in love with such poor Phillistine as this," mocked the other man, "thee would advise him to keep out of the way of temptation, yea, verily, I advise thee to mind thy own business."

I had decided that the man was a bully and a coward too, yet he looked so wickedly at the others that no one seemed inclined to displease him. But for some reason, rather say instinct, I took a dislike to him at once. Again he made as if to renew the assault, and once more the quaker interposed.

"Thee has no cause to assail him again, for hadst thee not given him the poison to benumb his senses, surely he would not now be so degraded before thee."

A savage oath was the answer to this speech, as the bully caught the hat from the quaker's head and threw it far over the heads of the spectators, and then glancing at the Indian who was trying to arise to his feet, he sprang forward and aimed a savage kick at his face. I had been gradually working forward, and now stood on the inner edge of the circle. With a quick movement I caught the rising foot and raising it with a swinging motion prevented it landing where it was intended to land, at the same time throwing the bully heavily to the ground. Springing to his feet he glared savagely at me, and I avoided his rush by side

stepping, and landed a heavy blow on his cheek; perhaps I struck harder than I intended to, for he spun around several times before he again located me. This time he approached me carefully but swearing viciously. I had spent years on the field of battle and in company with some of the roughest soldiers on earth, but I had never heard such oaths before. He glanced around the circle but saw no friendly face, but something more to his liking, for making a swift dart he seized a stout hickory cane from the hands of an old man who vainly tried to hold it from him. Then he advanced toward me, waving it in a threatening manner, and for some reason I began to laugh, and as I laughed he aimed a vicious blow at me. Laughing still, I seized the stick while it was yet in air and before he could recover his balance struck him fairly on the chin; he staggered and fell, leaving in my hand the cane he had tried to strike me with.

I heard several expressions of wonder and approval, and rightly guessed the bully was not a favorite in the town, as no single word was uttered in his defense. So I gave him a taste of the cane he had so obligingly brought to me, and with right good will I rapped him on the muscles of the arms to benumb them, an old trick of mine which I learned in my school days and which had been of great value to me on several occasions like the present. Then as the stick struck his hips I was greatly encouraged and amused by the words of the little quaker.

"Yea, verily, Goliath has met his David at last, and the Phillistine is sorely assailed. Smite him again David, smite him again. Now can the peaceful dwell in the valleys or peace. Verify the way of the transgressor is hard. Smite him hip and thigh, David, least he recover and assail thee when thou knowest not."

I had been laughing all through the bout, but my good nature returning to me I turned away from the man who was now pleading for mercy, and disregarding the advice

of the spiteful little quaker who advised me to "smite him again," I allowed the bully to depart.

"Friend art thou in search of something to satisfy the cravings of the inner man? If so, fain would I entertain thee."

I glanced around the group of people who had not yet departed and saw the half drunken Indian who had been the cause of all this trouble. He was standing erect now, his arms folded on his breast, and stood staring intently at me. Now crossing directly toward me he held up his hands, palms open in front of his face, a sign of friendship among the red men. I offered him my hand which he grasped in both his own; he held it thus a few seconds then began to speak.

"Bah. Too much rum, no good for Indian. Me plenty heap drink. No good." Then striking his breast with his clenched fist, and still retaining my own in his other hand, he said proudly, "Me Chief, Big Chief. Big fool. Heap drink. Me Big Beaver. No more rum. I have spoken. Who you?"

"LeClaire," I answered, "a soldier of the great father in Washington."

"My white brother, the trees may die in the forest, the rivers may change and turn back, but I will not forget, the sun may forget to smile on my people, but I will not forget. Big Beaver the Mohawk has spoken the words of his heart to his white brother."

Then turning, he walked slowly away, and a little later we saw him leaving town mounted on a powerful white horse.

"Friend, like thee I am not well acquainted in these parts, but although I know but little of the people here, I know the country well. I was about to begin my meal when I witnessed the attack on the inoffensive Phillistine. Verily, that meal still remains untouched, and I would enjoy thy company exceedingly, yea, verily."

This arrangement of his own seemed to please him, for

taking me by the arm he led me to a private house and seated me at a table where a goodly supply of bread and milk was set before us, and to tell the truth, I enjoyed that meal so well that bread and milk has been a favorite dish with me since that time.

"Friend, in what direction do thy duties call thee?"

"I am travelling toward the Lakes," I answered.

"Verily I had suspected as much. Thou hast the appearance of a man of war, and though thy calling is an unholy one I like thee exceedingly well and fain would have thy company to the parting of our ways. What say you, Friend?"

"I am travelling in haste, and will be on the road early and late."

"Thou hast in a few words expressed my desires, for verily I am greatly troubled to reach Cleveland."

"As our destination seems to be in the same direction, I shall be glad of your company, but we should secure a guide, for he might save us many miles of travel."

"Nay friend, a guide is not needed by me, for I say unto thee, that boy and man, I have travelled through this wilderness for many years, and am exceedingly familiar with the forest, the rivers, the streams, and the shortest pathways leading to the lakes and marshes that abound near them."

The peculiar tone of voice and the slow manner of his speech delighted me, for I could detect sterling qualities beneath his religious dress and demeanor that made me suspect him of being different from what he pretended to be. I knew that some of the most daring spies in the service of the British had adopted the garb of a quaker as it served them best in this country, and was watching him carefully all the time, determined that he should not be able to take me unawares if he was one of them.

"We will leave the road here friend. Unless it is thy desire to meet the gallant Proctor and his red allies. If this be thy desire then thou should follow this road to the top of the hill, when a view of their tents will meet thy vision."

He did not look in my direction while speaking, but steadfastly looked ahead. Instinctively I knew that his words were a challenge to discover my identity, nor was I disposed to dissappoint him, for I felt secure in his company, be he friend or foe, although I knew that all real quakers were true Americans.

"I have no desire to meet any of the British army at this time, much less the gallant Major and his red friends, although it may be my good fortune to meet them soon."

"Be not deceived friend, the good book tells thee that they who smite with the sword shall perish by the sword. It is therefor incumbent on each of us to be merciful, and also remember the divine command, 'Thou shalt not kill.' "

"Then you would tell me that it is contrary to the teachings of the Bible to fight or kill my enemies, even when they attack me—"

"Nay, friend, nay, the children of Israel smote the Midanites, smote them hip and thigh. So, that all who lived by the sword did perish thereby. Yea, verily, even the women and children did fall before the sword of Israel, for they were an abomination in the sight of the Lord. Read the thirty-first chapter in the book of Numbers, for it is written there."

There was a bitterness in this speech I did not understand. The voice and manner of speaking scarcely harmonized with the dress of a quaker.

"Friend, I have grave suspicions concerning thee. Verily I am unable to decide if thou art of the American or the British Army?"

"I am a Frenchman," I replied, "and but lately joined the American Army. I am now on my way to join our troops."

"Friend, thou hast relieved my fears, for I too, am of the Army though even now I am dressed in the raiment of my calling. Not that I would deceive, nay verily, thus saith the Lord. Avenge me the children of Israel of the Midanites, afterwards thou shalt be gathered unto thy people."

I looked at him in surprise, his strange words, and stranger actions, led me to believe that my companion was insane. Something of my thoughts must have entered his mind, for as he returned my look, his eye lost the flighty glare of madness and a tear dropped on the horn of his saddle.

"Friend, thee must not think that I am bereft of reason, nay, that would be unjust, but the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

The majesty of the forest, the great variety of the foliage, and the perfume of the flowers that grew in such abundance, proved a source of pleasure to me. I was lost in the admiration of it all, and hardly noticed that the sun had gone down and it was already growing dark, until my guide called my attention to the fact by urging his horse to a faster pace, which we continued for about a quarter of an hour, then we entered upon what seemed to be a wagon road, although it was already so dark that I could not tell if it were travelled often or not. Afar in the distance we could hear the howl of the timber wolf, mingling now and then with the shrill whistling of the mocking bird, or the plaintive too-whoo of the owl. The wind whistling through the branches of the rocking trees seemed to bend their tops far out of line, and, as they regained their natural position, made a most uncanny weird sound, almost unpleasant to the ear. I listened to the footfalls of the horses and could scarcely detect a sound.

"This road seems to be very little used," I remarked, for the want of something to say.

"Thou hast spoken truly friend, for the roadbed is so soft and damp that it has almost been abandoned for the one higher up on the hill. Yet it has been used lately too, for I have seen and heard many signs that the Lamanites are abroad this night."

"You surprise me, why I can hardly see ten yards in advance. How then can you hear or see anything that I cannot see? My eyes are good and I have a very keen sense of hearing."

"Thy eyes may be good, yea verily, and thy sight may be better than thy ears, but hark ye, can thee tell what strange beast uttered that sound?"

"Yes, it is the howl of the wolf. I have heard it in many parts of Europe," I answered, as a prolonged howl arose in the woods away off at the right.

"Now friend, canst thou see that star just glimmering through the night, verily it looks to be very near the top of the trees, canst thee discern it?"

As my eyes followed in the direction indicated by his extended arm, I was unable to see anything for a moment, but at last my patience was rewarded by the discovery of the star, at the same time another prolonged howl of the wolf showed them to be in the same vicinity.

"Canst thou see it now friend, see how the wind blows the branches of the trees back and forth across the star. Verily I say unto thee who art not learned in the crafts of a woodsman, that thee would not believe the howl of the wolf, or the light of the star, bodes harm to some peaceful settler. But I who have spent my life among them know that the lamanites and outlaws have planned the destruction of a peaceful village at break of day. They have recalled their scouts and will wait for light, but this time they will find a welcome little to their liking, for the good people will smite them hip and thigh, yea they will smite them with a great fury, verily they will enter the strongholds of the lamanites and hurl the messengers of death among them, and my ears shall hear their cries of pain, and my eyes shall witness their destruction, and my heart shall rejoice, for they are an abomination in the sight of the Lord."

A turn in the road brought us in sight of a village where many stout hearts had elected to build their homes, and establish there some of the industries the great state of Ohio was so well fitted to maintain.

The moon rising above the tree tops, seemed to smile on the homes of the pioneers, while the feeble light of the

candle in some of the homes assured a welcome to the stranger who might wander that way.

I could scarcely believe the words of my companion, the howl of the wolf was too natural to be imitated. The star he had mistaken for a light was one far off in the horizon, obscured now and then by the waving of the branches of the trees.

We rode at once to one of the most substantial houses in the town, and as my companion knocked vigorously at the door, a voice from the open window above demanded:—

"Who is it, and what do you want?"

"Friend Job, come down and open thy hospitable door, for we are both wearied and hungry."

"It is Mattias," and the shuffling of feet told that more than one person had listened to the answer.

In a brief space of time the door was thrown open, and my companion received a most hearty welcome, nor was I overlooked in this, for the rest of the family crowding into the room, received us with heartiness that left nothing to be desired. By the time our horses were fed, our supper was ready; the two women accompanied us into the house, while the father and son hurried away after a short consultation with Mattias, held in an undertone near the stable.

After eating a few bites of the splendid meal set before us, my companion turned to the woman and said slowly:

"Friend Martha, the Lamanites will attack this village at day break. Job and thy son have already gone to arouse the others, but be not afraid, for this day will I deliver them into the hands of my children, that they may avenge me of their iniquities, thus saith the Lord." Then turning to me he said, "Friend thou shall abide here until I send for thee, so eat and strengthen thy loins, that thy arm may be powerful in battle today."

The women of the house did not show any nervousness, but on the contrary acted with the most apparent unconcern. Perhaps, like me, they thought my companion had

been mistaken, and that there was no real cause for alarm.

"Where did you meet Mattias?" asked the younger of the two, as she seated herself in a chair near me.

"In Pittsburgh," I replied, "and though we rode together all the way, I was unable to discover any of the signs of Indians he claims to have seen."

"You should say the sign he seen, for he is too well versed in woodcraft to make any mistakes."

"Then you believe what he tells you? Yet I declare that I could hear nothing but the howling of lonesome wolves."

"A favorite way with the Indians to communicate with each other; if you had understood the sound, you would have noticed different variations from the real yelp of the wolf."

"I confess I am about as much in the dark about the red men as I am about my companion. He wears the clothes of a quaker, yet he seems to be ready to fight at all times. In fact, his dress belies his words, and his words contradict each other; I am at a loss regarding him."

"And you almost wonder if he is mad, is that what you mean?"

I did not answer her question, so she continued, "No he is not insane, but he has suffered greatly by the savage cruelty of the Indians and outlawed white men who accompany them. Sometimes he forgets himself and says the fiercest things, but his heart is as tender as a baby's heart."

"Have you time to tell me his story?" I enquired, as she busied herself about other things.

"Mattias was educated for the ministry, and being the son of a quaker, he readily took to the Indians and spent a great deal of his time trying to teach them to read and write, and at the same time convert them to his faith. About three years ago a party of quakers secured a tract of land on the Tombigbee River, in Alabama. He was one of that party and moved with his entire family to their new home in the south, but his duties often called him away from

home, for he travelled far and near telling the sweet story of our Saviour.

"About ten months ago, Tecumseth, the war chief of the north, visited the Creek Indians in Alabama, and excited them to such fury that they fell upon the settlers, and last August at Fort Mims murdered over five hundred men, women and children; among the murdered was the well-beloved wife, the father and two brothers of Mattias."

"Oh horrible, horrible," I exclaimed, as I walked back and forward on the floor.

"But that is not all; the red fiends took a few girls captive, not many, just a few, to satisfy some caprice of one of the powerful chiefs who lives somewhere near the boundary line of Ohio. Among them the two daughters of Mattias; so can you wonder if at times he seems mad? But he is not, and only shows his hatred for them when he is brooding over the great loss he sustained through them. Some call him the Quaker Captain, other the mad Quaker. But the Indians call him the Blue Cross, from a certain mark he leaves upon them, for be they outlaws or Indians he spares none that are on the war path, though treating with kindness any that are following peaceful pursuits."

"Tell me no more," I exclaimed, "tell me no more, this is too horrible to contemplate, but heaven save those innocent children."

A shudder passed over the form of the woman, and she was about to reply when the door opened and the young man who was her husband entered, bringing with him a number of women and children.

"We have already over three hundred able men to oppose them, and before another hour passes will have as many more, then let the red devils come, they will be welcome. Mattias wants you to go to him, follow me."

We found Mattias quietly talking to the men, and assigning them to different places where they would be needed. A number of old woodsmen had volunteered to secure in-

formation regarding the movement of the Indians, and by a system of signals, notify us almost as soon as they made the first move in our direction. The moon was now disappearing, but sufficient light yet remained to see objects for some distance.

"Friend, we have decided to call thee into our councils, and to advise with thee regarding the manner in which we will receive the Lamanites. We would teach them a lesson, yea, verily, we will destroy them, even as the host of Pharoah, whom the Lord caused to perish when they followed the children of Israel into the sea."

"Have you detailed men to guard that hill?" I asked, pointing at the same time to a well timbered bluff on the right, about a quarter of a mile from the rock house they called the fort.

"Nay friend, verily we have not deemed that hill of any importance, the Lamanites will cross the bridge and enter this peaceful village by the turnpike, verily we should have great strength there."

"If a hundred men were posted on that hill, the surprise would be complete; these men could conceal themselves until the engagement had begun, then open fire from the flank. This would demoralize the enemy, and aside from that, the hill is of great strategetical value in case they are strong enough to lay siege to the village."

"Thy words contain great wisdom. Yea, and we will profit by them, verily, we will harken to thy voice. You shall be the captain of a hundred men, and they shall do thy bidding, for I perceive me that thou art a valliant man, and used to scenes of battle."

Turning from me, he selected the men to guard the hill, and in a short time the ambush was effected. The wives and children of the settlers were arriving all the time, the men themselves reporting at once to Mattias for duty. This was not the first time they had been called on to defend their homes, and there was not so much of hurry and ex-

citement as one would expect who had never been amongst them. It was very dark now, and I was impatient for the coming of the light.

Not a sound could be heard by the keenest ear amongst us, though I knew that over five hundred men were at that moment awaiting the break of day; it was most remarkable, and yet these men had no special training, save that which they had acquired by years of waiting and watching the wily red man.

Someone has said that it is always darkest before dawn, so it proved on that lovely morning. One of my men, well versed in the arts of the woodsmen, assured me that the scouts had signalled the advance of the Indians, and a few moments later declared that all the scouts were now secure in the rock house they called the fort.

I will never forget the feeling that passed over me as I saw first one, then another of the savages emerge from the trees and bushes that skirted the roadside and cautiously approach the bridge. Then seeing no sign of anyone moving, motion for their comrades to approach. Then the long line of warriors who rode boldly across the bridge, and deploying to the right, approached our position. On they came, little dreaming that a hundred strong men were there, ready in an instant to give them battle. A movement of uneasiness among my men caused me to utter a low command, so low that it could not be heard ten feet away, but loud enough to be understood and passed along the line. At the foot of the hill, and less than a hundred feet from us, a large party dismounted, and after securing their horses, they began a careful advance toward the village. I could detect the cunning of this move; they intended to secret themselves before the main body of their friends began the attack; at that time they would be in a favorable position to do the most damage. I had no way of counting them, but I am ashamed to say that there were several white men among them, who were easily distinguished by their dress.

They had left several of their number as a guard over their horses, and in a few moments were ready for the opening of hostilities. I whispered a few words to those nearest me; a silent nod of the head showed me that they understood. Then the shrill war cry of the Indians startled the morning air. It was the first time I had ever heard it, so wild, so fierce and terrible that for an instant I could liken it to no other sound I had ever heard.

The roar of the small cannon was the answer to this cry, the rattle of muskets, and the cheers of men announced to the marauding Indians the unexpected situation they were called on to face. Nor was this all, fully fifty of their number fell at the first volley, and this before they discovered a man to shoot at. The effect of this too hearty greeting was to check the Indians in their charge, just as the settlers, many of whom were supplied with two rifles, fired a second shot into their rapidly falling ranks. I turned to my men, laughing at the demoralized line of the Indians. My men like true soldiers were waiting for the word to fire, and I could detect some uneasiness among them, as though some of them doubted the wisdom of my waiting policy. Again I whispered a few words, just as the Indians realizing the failure of their plans, began a hurried and disorderly retreat toward the bridge. But now those who had dismounted came rushing toward their horses, scarcely two hundred feet away. "Ready! Fire!"

The result of that first volley from our guns was appalling, for many fell among their number, but what pleased me best, the men I had selected to fire at the Indians who guarded the horses had proven their right to be respected as marksmen. Following me with a cheer, my men charged down upon the remaining Indians, who now mad with fright, broke and ran for the river, some crossing the bridge, some plunging into the river and swimming down stream, across stream, anywhere, as long as it enabled them to find shelter from the deadly bullets of the white man.

We were now joined by the men who had manned the fort, but an instinct intensely human seemed to take hold of Mattias, for he commanded us to cease the work of destruction, and in a few moments we had called the roll of our men, to find only fourteen slightly wounded and none killed or missing. The slaughter of the Indians had been fierce and fearful, sixty-three bodies being dragged together, while over a hundred were too severely wounded to escape. We had captured over a hundred horses, and expected to corral as many more. There was also a lot of first class equipment, consisting of saddles, bridles, and sabres, the kind used in the British army, though most of the Indians had no use for saddles or bridles, being better contented with only a willow thong in the mouth of their ponies.

"Friend, thou hast covered thyself with glory today, for the Lamanites have been dispersed, and the house of Israel has great cause to rejoice. Yea, verily, thou art a great captain, for there be those of thy command who now proclaim that in very truth thou didst laugh at the noise of battle, and that thou didst lead them with a strong arm and a valiant mein. Come, now let us visit the good dame Martha, for I am both a-hungered and weary, and I more than think that thou art likewise."

As I followed Mattias to the house I could not help feeling the utmost wonder at the great destruction of the Indians. Among them I discovered the remains of two white men, painted and besmeared like their Indian friends. I spurned them with my foot, as I remarked:

"These fiends are the real cause of the attack on the village."

"Thou hast spoken truly friend, but verily the blessed Saviour was betrayed to death by one of this kind, Judas."

It was still early in the morning, yet a battle had been fought and won by the men of the town, many of whom were already busy attending to their daily duties; others were preparing to return to their farms outside the village;

scouts had been sent to watch the Indians and a feeling of security prevailed everywhere. Mattias and I, having no part to perform, were soon soundly sleeping, and only awoke in time for lunch. The news of the fight had travelled far and fast, and already many visitors were in the village, waiting to meet the quaker captain who had on this as on other occasions been the means of saving both life and property for the settlers.

I could not wholly escape the praise so liberally bestowed on Matitas, although I was in no way responsible for the victory, but some insisted that it was because of my foresight that so many of the ponies had been captured, and that it was there too where the greatest execution had taken place. It was the general opinion that the Indians would not return to this neighborhood, and this was strengthened by the report of the scouts who were beginning to return, and reported the red men still hurrying away from the place that had been so disastrous to them.

It was impossible to get away from our friends without a great deal of ceremony, and a promise to visit them again at some future time. But at last we were on our way, and I was thankful for it, for they made so much of my part in the affair that I really was ashamed of myself for not having done more. I was entirely innocent of any knowledge in woodcraft, the Indians or their ways, so when we were at last fairly on the road I asked Mattias to enlighten me regarding them.

"Yea, friend, they have indeed a code of signals, yea, and they are very complete too, but not difficult to decipher. Verily I say that the Lamanites communicate with each other at a distance almost as easily as they do by word of mouth, but a wayfaring man though a fool, may see and hear and understand."

"It is a wonder to me that they let us enter the village last night."

"Not so friend, did thou but understand; we followed them

for several miles in the forest yesterday, but they were several hours ahead of us and did not think that they had been discovered. The loneliness of the forest and its nearness to the place they intended to plunder, made discovery almost impossible, unless discovered as we discovered it. Had we travelled on the highway, there would be a different story to tell today."

For some time after this brief but all too meagre explanation we travelled in silence. For myself I was filled with admiration for my companion, whose pitiful story had awakened my sincerest sympathies, and whose coolness and courage had safely led him through the trying period of the last twenty-four hours, where perhaps, a main trained in warfare would have failed. The longer I thought of it the greater became my desire to know him better, for the Creator had given to that small body a heart of immense proportions, and an exceedingly subtle and fertile brain.

"Friend, the morrow will soon be here, and with it the parting of our ways, for thee must to thy duty and I to my duties. It may be that in thy travels among the ungodly that thou will hear of some poor maidens or children who are held by the Phillistines, or the Lamanites, 'for there be white men who hold others for ransom.' If this should happen, remember the horses we captured, they are at thy disposal, use them freely, for they are of but very little use to white men though greatly esteemed by the Lamanites. And if thou should hear of such captives, I beg of thee that thou shall do all in thy power to effect their liberty. Nay, I recall that request, lest it might seem that I doubt thy manhood. Far be such a thought from my mind. But should you hear of such captives, then notify any of the friends whose names and address appears in this little book, they in turn will communicate with me."

I took the little book from his hand, and when he saw it safely placed inside my pocket, he told me the story of the Fort Mimms massacre, and the supposed captivity of his daughters, one twelve, the other fourteen years old.

"They may be dead or—" he never finished that sentence, but a shudder passed over him, and a groan escaped his lips. I reached over, and placing my hand on his, held it in sympathy, but nothing more was said on that subject.

"It behooves us to keep a sharp lookout now, friend, for there be those about who might take an unwelcome interest in our movements, the signs are everywhere, but we will soon be able to make diligent inquiries and find a shelter until the rising of the moon."

He was right, for in less than an hour we rode into a large yard and in response to our hail two overgrown boys appeared and showed us where to feed our horses. This done, we entered the kitchen to receive a hearty welcome, "such as it was," from the good woman of the house.

"And where did you come from, Mattias. Well I swan, you are the last person I would have expected to see tonight. Jonathan an' me was talkin' about you jest a short time ago. Land sakes, but the sight of you is good for sore eyes. Jest make yours'f comf'y, and we'll hev a bite reddy in a minit. Jonathan went ta Buff'lo yestidy, 'n outer bhome before this, but theres no dependence ta be placed on these men, even 'f I do say it as shouldn't. Set over there, Mattias, there now that's better. Hear about Jed Smith's wife Janet? Course not, how could you be spected to hear about it, 'n you not here f'r so long? Yew must like th' south, but set up an eat. Jonathan allus is mity hungry whin he gets back frum a trip. Law sakes but wouldn't he be pleased ta see you? There now, thet muttin is prime, jest killed day before yestidy. Allen Hilton had a runaway, an broke a whiffletree, but a'suppose you hearn about that, 'nd Maw White set a settin' o' eggs under ol' bidy, 'nd the boys played a joke on her 'n stoled th' eggs. You remember Maw, Mattias? always wus so nigh sited."

Mattias was paying strict attention to the news so rapidly repeated, and appeared to be greatly interested. As for myself, I had very little experience with women, and this

was a new kind for me to consider. I confess I did not understand her very well, but she was an excellent cook.

"Whoa, Bess." This command coming as it did from the outside, announced the return of the farmer and at the same time drew the attention of the sons who had stood and listened to their mother with a vacant stare on their faces, and the woman going to the door welcomed home her husband, and in her delight at some of the things he had brought from Buffalo, forgot to tell us the remainder of the joke on Maw White.

From the farmer we soon discovered that General Scott was supposed to be somewhere near Fort Erie, and that a considerable force of British troops were in the same vicinity. A battle was expected between them that would be of great importance to the people living on the shores of the great lakes. The settlers were thoroughly aroused by the depredation of the Indians, who had appeared in great numbers in the neighborhood of Detroit, but for that matter they were everywhere and let no opportunity pass to harass the American army or plunder the settlements on their line of march. Tecumseth, the most powerful chief in the north, was directing the Indians and that meant that sometimes they took a few prisoners, but not often, the scalp of an enemy being a mark of distinction and of less trouble than a prisoner.

The farmer urged us to remain all night with him, promising to return with us part way in the morning, for he had been inspired with the military fever and had joined the army. He had returned home to tell the folks about it, and give instructions regarding his place during his absence. But Mattias, like myself, being in a hurry to reach his destination, we mounted and rode away, just as the first faint glimmer of the moon penetrated the darkness of the night.

As we rode along he pointed out the many paths and highways to me, giving me instructions about my direction, and also valuable information regarding Indian customs and traditions.

"Friend, from what I have told thee, thou should have discovered that thou couldst save time if thou wast certain of thy destination. But the troops you seek may be at one place or the other, hence it is better to proceed slowly, and be sure of thy continued proceeding than to be suddenly confronted with thy enemies, and to be bound a prisoner."

"Friend Mattias, I recognize the truth of what you say, and will continue my journey by the turnpike."

"Verily, verily, thou wilt be safer that way, and much as I regret to separate from thee, the parting of our ways is near. Do not forget the addresses I have given thee. Now I must take the turnpike to the left, as it saves me many miles of travel; I would continue with thee to Buffalo, did I but think that danger menaced thee. Thy horse is in fine fettle for a race and it is sometimes braver by far to run, for a fool might be overtaken by numbers and slain in battle, so where thou seest one, remember there is nearly always more than one in ambush. Yea, verily the odds are always against thee. Now may the God of Abraham be with thee, for our parting is here."

We had reached a cross road by this time, and Mattias held out his hand to me. I grasped it so warmly that I knew the grip was painful by the quick glance he gave our hands.

CHAPTER IV.

A feeling of regret filled my mind when I thought of the loss of this valuable companion, and I made up my mind to leave no stone unturned that might reveal the hiding place of the miscreants who had abducted his daughters. True that happened in another state far south of our present location, but I now determined to go south in search of them at the very first opportunity I found. Speculating on

the chances of my finding them, or of my ever meeting Mattias again, I lost all consciousness of time or travel, until I found myself entering the outskirts of Buffalo. The sun was already beating down fiercely, and I was glad to rest my tired horse, and refresh myself.

I had very little trouble in following General Scott, who had been quartered at Black Rock, a few miles from Buffalo, but had moved over to Fort Erie, this fort having surrendered to him. From there I followed his trail, finally overtaking him at the village of Chippewa, and then for the first time in my life, had the pleasure of seeing an American army in readiness for war.

Lately there had been a number of engagements between the opposing forces, and for the most part these small battles had gone in favor of the Americans. The latest of these battles being the battle of Chippewa, which occurred the day before I joined them.

No wonder they were sanguine. I have always noticed the same thing in man or beast, that is, that a consciousness of strength and ability and the power to use that strength made the possessor more aggressive and ambitious, but the knowledge of possession was of greater importance than the simple possession. This is particularly so in army life, once let an army suffer a series of defeats and the men lose confidence, in their officers first, then in themselves; it is impossible to instill into them the spirit so essential to win battles. So, although giving the British army credit for great bravery, and stubborn determination, the rank and file of the American army believed themselves unbeatable. This was the *Espirit D'Corps* Napoleon had tried so hard to maintain in the army of France, and the American army was full of it.

I felt a feeling of elation stealing over me as I became conscious of this, and realized that these men were to be my comrades, that they were no furlorn hope, but brave active men, who could go into action with a song on their tongues.

Nor did I underestimate the British, I had met them too often to make that mistake. I had never found them wanting in the qualities of true soldiers. Brave, daring, generous to a fault, just as ready to charge a battery as they were to eat a meal, and a good Englishman likes a good meal.

Having delivered the package intrusted to me by the President, I had retired for some distance and stood thinking over the situation, while the Generals, there were three of them, read and discussed their contents. I had filled my pipe and was happy, my one concern being that I had left Marcus, my horse, in Buffalo, being unable to get him across the river to Fort Erie, and the rest of the journey had been made on a hired horse, and a very poor one at that.

"Sir, the General desires your presence," said an officer as he saluted me. I returned the salute, then was about to accompany him when he held out his hand, at the same time his eye was fastened on the lapel of my coat. I grasped his hand firmly, and felt a peculiar pressure of the fingers, as he exclaimed:

"Four Sixteen."

"Sixteen Four." I answered the challenge rather in a daze than otherwise, for I had not expected to hear it in this part of the world, at least never from anyone in the American army. Something of what was passing in my mind must have flashed upon his own, for his next words explained a good deal.

"I was educated in France, but here comes the General, we will talk of it hereafter."

I had already been presented to General Ripley, but several other officers now coming forward, I met them all in turn, fine big bronzed men, who at once began to make me feel that I was one of them.

"Count, for the time being, may I hope that you will accept a position on my staff? You can do a great deal of

good there at the present time, and I assure you that you will find many opportunities to display the many good qualities spoken of so highly by the President and the secretary of war."

"You honor me," I answered, "I had expected nothing, perhaps a company at the most."

"No, you rank as Brigade General by your commission which was among the papers you brought here. It is signed by the President and the Secretary of War, and I have great pleasure in presenting it to you," handing me the paper as he spoke. "Now we will all go to lunch, after that we will go into detail."

"Colonel Blethen thinks that the victory of yesterday will check the British for some time to come," he remarked as we resumed our conversation, "and this opinion is substantiated by the fact that they have suddenly disappeared."

"Be not deceived, General, I have known the British to be soundly beaten before they got started to fight, and then rally and drive their enemy from the field; for that matter, the fox never walks directly into the bait," I answered.

"Sensibly spoken," said General Ripley. "My opinion is that they will show themselves from some unexpected quarter, what do you say, Jessup?"

Major Jessup, who had been a great factor in the victory of the day before, smiled good naturedly as if to agree with the speaker, but said nothing. He was a very remarkable man of very few words, so Colonel Blethen described the major to me in the afternoon.

We discussed first one thing than another, for the greater part of the lunch hour, but at last the council ended, and Blethen and myself sought the shade of a tree growing near the banks of the river, and in a short time he was aware of the circumstances leading up to my present position.

"You can hardly conceive how great was my surprise to discover that pin on your coat," he began, "and for that

matter how gladly I welcome you. Of my own membership in the society. I can only say that my grandsire was a diplomat who represented the United States at the Court of France. While in France, he became greatly interested in the customs of the people. On his return home, he sought out my father, who was still in the army, although the revolution and the events concerning it were past history. My grandfather had a serious talk with my father and in the end gave me letters of introduction to friends in France and started me on my way, and in a short time I became a student in Paris, where I met the Count D'Sayre. We attended school together, and became greatly attached to each other; you know the history of the circle, for I have had several letters from D'Sayre. Although I did not expect you here, I knew that our Captain was in America. D'Sayre tells me about your wonderful fencing, and I would like to take instructions from you."

"Then let us begin at once," I answered, "for I have not crossed sticks with any one in several days, although I practice daily at shadow fencing.

It did not take long to find two hickory saplings, these we stripped of the bark and began our practice. This exercise was only a beginning, for in a short time several others asked to be included. To this I consented, and invited any of the privates who cared for this instruction to join the drills. Many of them accepted the invitation. One of them set us all laughing at the remark, "That it would be a good thing to know at home, it would enable him to dodge the fire tongs, for until now his wife had been impressed with the fact that she was the best fencer on earth." This man proved to be the wit of the camp, and had many friends among both officers and men. This exercise began to be one of the daily events of the camp, affording as it did no little amusement during the days when we had very little to do but wait for reinforcements, and watch the enemy.

I had always had a desire to visit Niagara Falls since arriving in their vicinity. Having told this to Colonel Blethen, we arranged to make the visit together, as we were now within a few miles of the great cataract. After lunch, on the twenty-fifth day of the month, we mounted two good horses and started in that direction. We had not gone far when the roar of the water reached our ears, increasing in volume every moment. I was looking eagerly; at my right side was a mighty river, rushing madly on to dash with resistless force into the mad caldron below. "How beautiful those hills over there on the left," I remarked, calling the attention of my companion to the highlands on that side of the river; then I jerked my horse so suddenly that he began to go backward. Blethen rode a few steps in advance, before turning to see if anything was wrong.

"Colonel, we have discovered the British," I remarked, "they are intrenched in those hills, just over there."

He turned his horse and gazed in the direction I indicated, and in less than a moment exclaimed:

"Yes, and they are in force too."

"You return to the Fort and report the discovery," I said. "I will try to find out their exact position and strength."

Without a word he rode rapidly away; then I began to ride around the hill. I felt sure that we had been seen by the men on guard, so was careful not to go within range of their rifles, but took some chance that the horse I rode would be able to outrun any they might have if they tried to run me down. The appearance of a number of men on horseback indicated their purpose, to get close enough to me to use their rifles, but this did not hinder me from making a dash around the hill, where to my delight I discovered several things of importance for the ears of our General.

A hurried glance over my shoulder showed me that the troops sent out after me were riding in different directions, intending to intercept me at different points before I could reach the American lines. I was aware that the horse

under me was a good one, but how I wished for Marcus. I was speeding along quite lively, and had no fear of those who followed me around the hill, but those who had gone in a direct line were considerably in advance. I turned my horse so as to ride farther away from them, and patted his neck and spoke to him, not to urge, but rather to check him, for he was a good horse and running easily, and I knew the value of saving him for a final trial, and I could see that my pursuers were doing their utmost now.

Several shots were fired in my direction, but I thought that there would be very little danger to me under the circumstances. We were going too fast for anyone to fire with any degree of accuracy, although I had seen the dirt fly up in two places just short of the line I travelled, so when I knew that their guns were discharged, I changed my course and rode in a more direct direction toward our forces. This move on my part was the result of seeing a number of our advance guard already secreting themselves behind the trees and bushes growing near their line of march. The British troops had also discovered the ambuscade, and refused to follow, but turned and rode rapidly away, just as the main body of our troops numbering about four thousand men came in sight.

There was very little ceremony after that, for in a very short time our General had issued his orders and the battle was begun.

It is a difficult undertaking for any one to describe all the events of such a battle, the success of our men at one part of the field would be duplicated by the enemy in another part, until a detachment of ours sweeping around the hill, came suddenly face to face with General Riall and his entire staff and in a few moments had taken them all prisoners. Notwithstanding the loss of their able leader, the British, now led by General Drummond, fought with great a battery on the hill which was doing great damage to us. courage, contesting every movement to the last, supported by

General Brown who had joined us since the action began, called Colonel Miller to his side and waving his hand in that direction, said:

"Take your regiment and storm that battery; hold the hill, Colonel, hold the hill."

Away went the men selected to perform a duty as dangerous as any I had ever seen. A battery well served by brave men is not an easy thing to take, and many fell on both sides before it was secured to the Americans. Three times did the enemy rally, and reinforced try to retake the hill: In the last charge, General Drummond who led the enemy was severely wounded and taken from the field. It was now dark and the British retired from the field, leaving our army victorious. Thus ended one of the greatest battles of the war, the battle of Lundys Lane, sometimes called the battle of Niagara.

But the greatest battles ever fought are not of the greatest interest to the men who do the fighting. It is the morning after, at the roll call, when the feelings of the men are at the greatest tension, as the long list of names are read by the company commander. Then those able to answer, "Here," congratulate themselves, and each other, but when a name is called and no answer is given, the men feel a choking sensation around the region of the heart, and an involuntary stiffening of the muscles that for the moment unnerves them, but only serves to fire their minds with new ambition, ambition to win that for which their comrades have laid down their lives.

It was so in this case; we had about four thousand men engaged in the battle, over eight hundred of these were among the killed, wounded and missing. However, the old saying, "that misery loves company" proved true on this occasion, for we rejoiced in the fact that the British loss exceeded our own. I had a slight headache too, for the simple reason that some one in the ranks of the enemy had selected me as a target to try his markmanship on, and the

bullet sent in my direction with such evidence of good intention, plowed a crease along the side of my head just above the ear. This was very annoying, but I congratulated myself that the bullet was not an inch to the right when it touched me, and was ready to accompany Colonel Blethen when he came to see if I was able to go to headquarters where a great surprise awaited me.

After the usual greetings had passed between us, General Brown, who was in command that day, opened a paper that was laying on the table before him, and glancing at its contents, handed it to me, at the same time saying:

"Your friends from Pennsylvania are determined to have you with them, and this order directs you to report to General Jackson at your earliest convenience. We regret this very much, LeClaire, for we prize you very highly here, and we shall miss you, but be sure we will remember you as one of those we tried and proved true. This letter tells us that you were in a fight with the Indians on your way here; you never told us about that."

"No sir, I did not think it worth while, my part in the affair was of very little importance."

"Yet this letter says that because of your advice, they were able to deliver the most crushing blow of the fight, and secured all told about one hundred and seventy ponies, in fact a full account has been written here, but was delayed in its delivery; but the Indians are very troublesome still, and it may be necessary to send troops after them. Will you be ready to start on your journey in the morning?"

"I am ready to start at once, sir."

"Yes I know, but I have letters and dispatches to prepare."

"I will be ready to start in the morning."

"Good, you will proceed to Buffalo this evening, and await there for letters. Colonel Blethen will cross the river with you; he has his orders already. I need not tell you, sir, that you have made many warm friends here, and wherever you are we shall expect to hear of action, for you seem to find the enemy."

Blethen and myself spent several hours viewing the wonderful waterfalls, and having descended a steep pathway, we stood on the shore of the river to watch the water strike its lower course, then go whirling madly down the rocky bed of the river, circling in seething pools, or dashing against the walls of the gorge, with a fury that threatened them with destruction. Unconsciously I raised my hat as I viewed the majesty of the scene, and stood contemplating this masterpiece of nature until Blethen called my attention to the fact that I was being thoroughly soaked by the spray of mist that, rising like a cloud, was falling on us, and our clothing was wet to the skin.

Returning to quarters we had lunch, said good-bye to our friends and about a mile above the island found a boat to cross the river, then started for Buffalo about thirty miles distant. A good team covered this distance in the afternoon, so we arrived in the city in time to eat our supper, and after dressing ourselves hurriedly we attended a mass meeting of the citizens, celebrating the victory won so near their own city, that had the result been different, the place with all its stores might have been in the hands of the enemy.

The bandage around my head had been replaced and the wound still smarting under the dressing, forced me to wear my hat tilted on the right side of my head, which, as Blethen so humorously remarked, caused me to look like a desperado. We were met at the door by two or more ladies, who inquired if we were the two men just arrived from the Falls; on being answered in the affirmative, we were escorted to a seat near the speaker's stand. The evening being warm, I took off my hat, intending to use it as a fan, and at that moment a burst of deafening applause broke out among the people who had already assembled. I gazed eagerly toward the door of the hall, trying to discover the cause of the outburst, but as I could see nothing likely to cause so much emotion, I turned to Blethen and asked him the reason.

"Reason, General. It is that bandage on your head; they already know the part you played, and take this chance to show their admiration for what you did."

I could feel the veins swelling in my face. This was something unexpected, but before I had recovered from my embarrassment, the meting was called to order and the speaker of the evening was describing in glowing language the incidents of the battle; he said:

"Several of the heroes of that battle are present tonight, among them the two who first discovered the enemy; one who rode to notify General Scott, and the other who dared everything to discover the position and number of the enemy, and gained valuable information for our General, which materially assisted in defeating the enemy. To these two men, I present the freedom of our city, and these two lovely swords made within our gates. May your lives be as true as the steel in the trusty blades I have the honor to present to you in the name of the city of Buffalo."

Two young ladies had approached us, carrying two fine swords and belts, and obeying a motion from them we stood up while they fastened them about us, as cries of "speech, speech," were heard from all parts of the hall. The ladies taking hold of me gently urged me to the front, and then left me alone staring at such a lot of faces that I did not know what to say, and felt mutinous, but as they continued to shout at me, I was not sure if they were about to make a charge in my direction, so I drew the sword as a matter of self protection, and then discovering that their intentions were really of a peaceful nature, I smiled as I saluted them, then kissed the hilt of the sword, and returned to my seat, the two young women still trying to prevent my doing so.

Blethen, who was used to such incidents as this, made a very neat little talk, during which he referred to me as "that Frenchman of ours," which won a round of applause for him and several laughs at my expense. But no matter, I could

beat him at dancing, which I soon proved after the banquet was over.

During the evening I discovered that a messenger had carried the news to Buffalo ahead of us, he having a good start while we were visiting the Falls. And the reception, although hurriedly arranged, was a great success, if one can judge from the way people seemed to enjoy themselves.

Rumors had arrived concerning another Indian fight. It was said that Tecumseth had again appeared among them, and the stories told of their cunning and cruelty made my pulses throb with an ever quickening desire to take the field against them. I also heard that General Jackson was engaged in the duty of teaching them to be good Indians, and for that matter, all dead Indians were supposed to be good Indians at that time, although I had a strong suspicion that this was not true, at least no one ever tried to prove it in behalf of the Creeks.

The messenger from the Falls arrived with a bundle of letters, and shortly after I said good-bye to Blethen, mounted my own good horse and started on my return journey, happy in the fact that I was trusted as the messenger of the President of the United States.

There is always a feeling of security in the mind of a man who is mounted on a good horse, and Marcus was now carrying my weight. I knew that no matter how difficult the path might be, he would return by exactly the same trail he had travelled to reach the city, although he had travelled the other direction some time ago. But he was a sagacious animal, and often had I turned him loose at night to forage for himself, confident that he would never be so far away that he could not hear my signal and come at once to me. When alone at times, foolish as it may seem, I held long conversations with him, and was delighted to see him pointing his ears in this or that direction, for I accepted this as a sign that he understood me. This was one of those times, for once fairly started I began:

"This is a nice, cool day, Marcus, one of the kind we like to travel in, but it looks like rain." I paused to give him an opportunity to answer me, then continued, "We will be lucky if we don't get wet before we reach Jonathan's house."

Marcus answered this by breaking into a swinging gallop, one I knew he could sustain for hours if necessary, and by good luck we arrived at Jonathan's home almost as soon as it began to rain. And how it did rain, a perfect deluge if ever one fell in so short a time. The roads were completely soaked, and in many places under water. But it was over in two hours, and I was ready for the road again.

Job and Martha responded to my greeting with smiles, and I remained overnight in the village of Bradford. The saying that news travels fast was true here, for during the evening many of the settlers came to call on me, and I told them of the battle at Niagara, and of the victory to our arms, and they were happy too and built fires and made speeches, for they were a very loyal people.

Again I heard stories of Indian cruelties in settlements farther south and west, and was advised to be on the lookout for them all the time, and if I saw any signs to report it to the nearest settlement.

The first sign of daylight found me in my saddle, and before sunrise I had entered the forest through which Matthias and I had rode less than a month ago.

"Hear the birds sing, Marcus," I exclaimed, "Smell the perfume of the flowers, are they not delightful?" Then as Marcus gave no sign of answering, I continued to speak. "This is the same forest we came through a month ago, the same flowers are here, the same birds, and the same—" My speech was cut short by the sudden stopping of Marcus, who tossed his head in the air and threw his ears forward. A single glance ahead showed me a bunch of Indians who had suddenly appeared about a quarter of a mile away, and were riding in my direction. "Damned Indians," I exclaimed, finishing the sentence I had already begun, though in a different manner from what I intended to end the speech.

A quick glance around me showed plainly that I had walked into a trap, for they were deploying all around me. The ambush had been well planned, but I prepared to sell my life at the best price I could get for it, so I began to laugh, and laughing, headed Marcus in the direction of a small lake on my left, where only a few of the Indians were in sight. With a shout of defiance I dashed toward it. I saw the Indians near it getting ready to fire at me, but my pistol spoke first and one of them fell.

A wild yell greeted this evidence of my intention, such a fierce blood curdling yell, startling the birds from the trees and the echo making it sound the more terrible to the ear.

"On Marcus, good horse, you have never failed me yet, once in the lake we will swim for it, good old boy, good old boy."

My aim had been good and two of their warriors now lay before me, but the others were gathering around. I felt a sharp stinging pain in my breast and attempted to draw my sword. Then as Marcus dashed under the branches of a tree, felt myself torn from the saddle and falling heavily to the ground. I was up in an instant, and my sword flashed before me, causing the nearest warriors to halt for an instant undecided regarding the next move; a glance after Marcus showed me a number of the mounted fiends were trying to catch him. I was already laughing, but how I laughed at their efforts, and at those who opposed me, for I could see that he had already passed their lines and was moving rapidly away.

"Does the white man think he can fight all my braves together?"

This question in perfect English startled me, and I turned my head to see the speaker, but I was laughing as had always been my habit when in earnest about anything. As our eyes met, I saw an Indian above the ordinary man in height, decorated with many badges, and wearing a pair of epaulets on his shoulders; all this was borne to my mind at a single glance, as he continued:

"See, they are as many as the trees in the forest, why does my brother laugh at them, has the great spirit placed his frown on you, and has his hand been heavy?" This speech was accompanied by a wave of the hand, indicating to his followers that I was mad.

Mattias had told me that the Indians would never injure an insane person, fearing that the curse he had been under would be transferred to themselves, but they might keep him a captive for years, or let him go when satisfied that the finger of manitou had been placed upon him; all this flashed on my mind in an instant, and seeing that he had mistaken my laughter for madness, I resolved to play the part, so I answered:

"The Great Spirit is my brother, it is the Great Spirit who speaks to me and tells me not to fear, as the forest is all my own; white men or red men who enter here are all thieves. Get out I say, get out of here," and I laughed again as I started toward him, but finding myself seized from behind I struggled with the strength I possessed but was finally overpowered and bound. Still I laughed, for well I knew my life depended on it. Then they turned their attention to the two braves I had shot. By a strange coincidence, they had both been hit in the same place, between the eyes, and in the superstitious mind of the Indians this had great effect, for they reasoned that the bullets had been guided by the evil spirit, no other agency could place them so accurately. So I received some attention from them; the wound on my breast was washed and dressed, then they placed me upon the back of a vicious horse and started away in a westerly direction.

Of all the horses I had ever rode this horse was the worst. He tried repeatedly to bite my leg, and kicked out viciously at anything near him; once he succeeded in getting hold of my leg and bit me severely. This afforded the savages great amusement, but then, it was my leg, not theirs, that was bitten.

I was too closely guarded to make any attempt to escape, and aside from that, my wound was quite painful, so I contented myself by resting as much as possible and making a study of the country. They treated me very nicely, too, giving me plenty of meat and dried corn, one of the number dressing my wounds, but I never forgot to laugh at everything that happened. They had taken the bandage off of my head, and the long scar above my ear was considered the cause of my insanity; this belief I encouraged in many ways, even long after that time when the wound was healed.

It was the afternoon of the second day when we came to a small lake, really several lakes joined together by a river running between them. On the shores of this lake was the Indian village consisting of several hundred tepees and cabins, and several hundred or more dogs came running toward our party, barking furiously as they came. The Indians soon sent the pack scampering back to camp, and in a short time I was led to an old cabin and given to understand that this was to be my home.

During the following week my wounds healed rapidly, and only the scars remained, so I resumed my physical exercises and shadow fencing. These exhibitions were taken as an additional proof of my madness, and were a source of great wonder to the tribe, but, as they had taken my weapons from me, they had no particular meaning to them.

Early on the morning of the eighth day after our arrival in the village, a pole decorated with many human scalps was erected in the open space in front of the tepees occupied by the chief. Nearly every person in the village wearing some article of personal adornment, caused me to wonder what it could mean. Soon different groups of warriors began to arrive, and by noon several hundred had swelled our population. I was allowed the freedom of the place, but was given to understand that I must not go near the scalp pole.

Among the arrivals were some of those men whose life

was a lasting rebuke to mankind, too low and savage even for the Indians to associate with, outlawed by their own race, they took naturally to the Indian customs, and were able to invent new delevtries to torture the unfortunate victims who fell into their possession.

As I stood watching one of these groups, one of the white men was talking, swinging his arm wildy, as if to give force to his arguments, and as his motions increased in rapidity, I began to wonder what he was talking about—and ventured a little nearer. It was then I saw his face and recognized the bully who was beating the drunken Indian in Pittsburgh about six weeks ago, and who had received such a beating from me. I had now approached within a few steps of the group, when he turned and saw me. Such a look of fiendish joy I had never seen before on the face of any person, such a look of hatred as he recognized me. Then with a savage oath he jumped forward and tried to strike me, but I stepped aside, and his blow meeting nothing to stop its force, he lost his balance and fell headlong into the fire which had been kindled for cooking purposes outside.

He was only there an instant, however, but that was long enough to severely burn one of his hands and scorch his face. In the intensity of his pain he was drawing a knife to attack me with, when the Indians interfered, and prevented him from rushing upon me. How I did laugh; there was no make believe about it, it was the real, genuine mirthful laugh that can only be uttered by a person who is greatly amused. Then while the Indians led him away, two of his companions rushed toward me, but I grasped one in each hand and taking them unawares jerked their heads together with a bump and tossed them into the same fire where their friend had been a moment ago. Several of the Indians now seized me from behind and rushed me in the direction of my cabin, while others surrounded the white men and prevented them from killing me.

The Indians soon made it manifest to me that they re-

garded my actions as a misdemeanor which they would not allow me to repeat, for drawing me up alongside of a small tree, they bound me securely to it, almost before I realized what they were doing. Then leaving me securely bound with my hands fastened behind the tree, they rejoined their friends, who were dressing the burns of the renegades with balsam, and gathering in the circle once more.

My attention was attracted by a party of Indians who were just leaving the woods and coming toward the village. As I looked I could see that they brought a number of prisoners with them, several of those were mounted on ponies, but the greater part were walking, bound together with a strong sapling fastened securely under the arms and forcing them to walk with the utmost precision, or be dragged along by the others. The horror of their position flashed upon me as I recognized several young girls and women among them. The men who were bound together were intended for such tortures as only such devils could devise. But the women, I shuddered as I thought of them. How I struggled and strained at the thongs that bound me, but I was powerless, I could do nothing to help them, I could not feel one single strand loosen, rather if anything, they seemed tighter than ever; with all my strength, I was powerless here. As this truth burst upon me I laughed long and loud. Perhaps it was well for them that I was considered mad. But there was no acting about it now, for I was mad, not the madness of insanity, but the madness of passion had mastered me, and the violence of my laughter drew the attention of the new comers in my direction; but to the Indian mind it was soon explained, "The Great Spirit frowns upon him."

A council was already in progress between several of the Chiefs and the white men who had already arrived, and as I regained control of my feelings, I could see by the gestures and looks in my direction that I was the subject of their discussion. I was soon to find out that while no Indian would

do anything to injure an insane person, they never interfere with others who choose to disregard the superstition, and may so far ignore the unsound condition of mind, even in one of their own race, that they lose their responsibility to the Great Spirit by selling or giving away the inflicted one after the act has been sanctioned by all the Chiefs of the tribe.

About half an hour had been consumed in this discussion, when the bully, for I knew no other name for him, left them and came in my direction, followed by several of the Indians. I was smiling as he approached me, but halting a few feet away, he scowled fiercely at me.

"Smile, damn you smile, and keep on smiling; laugh all you please now, but take my word for it, it will do you no good, you belong to me now, do you hear? To do as I please with. Just as soon as the Chiefs arrive, I am going to build a fire around this tree; how do you like the idea? Say, how do you like it?"

As he asked this question he slapped first one side of my face then the other, with brutal force, and again I strained at my bonds as he repeated the operation.

I laughed at him again and again, as he administered the punishment, at the same time this angered him more and more, as he continued to chastise me, coming closer to me all the time, he had overlooked one thing, that was, that all the lashing that bound me to the tree were above the waist, and it was several hours after before he recovered from the kick I gave him, a kick so vicious, in a spot so tender that it deprives the victim of every earthly power, save the power to suffer untold agony in the shortest space of time. I knew that I was safe for the time being, but wondered and almost dreaded the time when he would return that kick with interest.

I could see the Indians preparing the noonday meal, the sun was now directly above me, and shining down fiercely upon me, and to add to my suffering, my arms were so fast-

ened around the tree that they began to cramp, my lips were almost parched with thirst, and my agony was intense, but I still had power to plan the vengeance I would take on that man if I ever got free. Gradually I began to feel a stupor beginning with a headache, and my chin was falling forward on my breast, I wondered if this was the beginning of the end, and prayed for death to end my suffering. Suddenly I felt the splash of water dashed on my head and face, and raised my eyes to look into the dark brown eyes of a young Indian girl. This kindly action restored my failing senses, and a few drops trickled into my mouth, slightly relieving the burning of my throat. This was a brave thing for her to do, for had she been detected in it, she stood a chance of being flogged, at least that was the custom of the women of the tribe, several of them had been flogged by others since I came among them. But her act had been unnoticed, so she pressed the gourd to my lips and allowed me a few swallows of refreshing drink.

"The white man is brave," she whispered, "be brave some more, just a little longer." I could not understand this kindness on her part, but in my heart I thanked her for it.

Then she passed on up the hill, having refilled her gourds from the lake. Some friendly expression in those brown eyes had filled me with hope, and I began to take an active interest in what was transpiring around me.

When the mid-day meal had been finished, the scalp pole was moved under the shade of a number of big trees, and the braves danced around it in a fantastic manner, all the while singing a low, weird chant, resembling nothing I had ever heard. Then all seated themselves in a circle, and lit a huge pipe which was passed from one to another around the circle. Still it was evident that the council was not complete, a motion among them indicated the appearance of someone who had caused the delay. And the young woman who had befriended me, passed me going toward them, wearing the most wonderous garments I had ever seen on

any woman, but I will not attempt to describe it, sufficient to say it was set with costly ornaments, stones and beads, and was the most dazzling dress I had ever seen a woman wear. As she passed me, she smiled and whispered, "Be brave."

Following her at a distance were several Chiefs, who moved with the utmost deliberation. First I recognized Tecumseth, the Chief who commanded the war party the day I was captured, the others were all strangers to me, yet something about the person of one young man recalled someone I had met before. Then in an instant I recalled him, he was the drunken Indian at Pittsburgh, but who was he here? Would he recognize me, and would he come to my assistance. No he did not recognize me, for he passed on without a glance in my direction, or if he did glance my way, the glance was devoid of meaning.

Now the tom toms began to beat, and a strain of some tribal song was begun, first by several young ladies of the tribe, who clustered around the friendly maiden. When this strain was ended, eight young men began to circle around the young chief I had mistaken for Big Beaver, and sung and danced with a great deal of action, then at the close of the song, one of the old men began to speak; he must have been an eloquent speaker, for he received the strictest attention. At the close of the speech, the maiden approached the young chief, and he rising to receive her, laid his arm across her shoulder. It was then the real noise began, every Indian present tried to outdo every other Indian and the white men took a part in this ceremony, doing their best to outdo the red men. I had just witnessed a wedding ceremony of the tribe, a ceremony that not only united two loving hearts, but also united several of the most powerful tribes of Indians on the frontier. I afterwards learned that the song of the maidens extolled the virtues, and the beauty, and the sweetness of character in the young woman, and that the young men had sung of the bravery, the strength,

the cunning, the swiftness of foot and the wisdom of their young chief, who was son of a chief for many generations back.

But now the maiden crossed the circle, and took a seat near Tecumseth, then the young man arose and pointed in my direction, and gave a short, sharp command which I did not understand. All eyes were now turned toward me, and I could tell by his motions that he was urging them to place me with the other prisoners. I saw Tecumseth shake his head in an undecided manner, as the young man himself arose and came in my direction. In a short time he had reached me, and in a second more he had cut the withes that bound me, and I was free, but so great was the reaction, caused by the sudden relaxing of my bonds, that I would have fallen if he had not caught and steadied me with his hands.

Placing me in the group of prisoners he resumed his place in the circle, and began to speak again. As he did so one of the prisoners, who understood the language, repeated the words in English. I was fortunate in being near this man, who was not able to repeat all that was said, but I could surmise some of it from the actions of some of the actors.

"Is it well that on such a day as this, there should be some among us who are unhappy? Look at the sun above the treetops, see how it smiles upon us, look at the waters of the little lakes, their waves ripple peacefully and throw back the smiles of the sun. The birds in the air are singing their songs for Nannianna, the flowers are casting their sweetest breath before the winds, to make the air sweeter and purer this day for Nannianna. My young men have come to see the happiest day in the life of Tanneron, their Chief. The day when he took as his wife the fair sister of the great Chief Tecumseth, the lily of the Hurons, whose heart is as gentle as the heart of a dove, and her smile as tender as the breath of the flowers. You who have known

and loved her, you who have always praised her wisdom, and her devotion to that which is right, you who are of the Huron race of people, to you she appeals; surely her people will harken to the voice of Nannianna, and let her wedding day remain bright and fair, for it would be a sign of evil to her if on this day her brothers should harden their hearts and listen to the voice of the evil spirit. Nannianna pleads for the life of the white men and maidens who are prisoners in the village of the Hurons, and her heart says to her people, "Let the white men and maidens return to their homes, and the Great Spirit will harken to the voice of the Hurons."

It is impossible to tell what the result of this speech would have been, but as he took his seat at the side of Tecumseth, the bully whom I had failed to discover, arose to speak, his face was turned in my direction, and there could be no mistaking the look he gave me. He began speaking, slowly at first, but growing faster and more eloquent as he proceeded.

"Tanneron is a great Chief, the Chief of a people who are as many as the sands on the shore of the sea. Tanneron is a wise Chief and his words are good. Tanneron is the Chief of a people who never break their word, for their words are better than the oaths of many other people. Tanneron has just married the lily of the Hurons, and his heart is soft today. Tanneron is our brother, therefor we have listened to his voice, for it is as music to our ears, it was like the song of the birds, and the ripple of waters, it was a sweet sound, but Tanneron is young and has many years to live before he can speak with the tongue of a prophet. The Chiefs of the Hurons have always been known as men who speak with a straight tongue, and keep their promise to their friends, for it is the custom of a great people."

"The Chiefs of the Hurons have already spoken, and their words are wise; they have said that the white maidens shall enter the homes of their young men, and give birth to a race of warriors; this is good, and the Great Spirit will smile

upon them, and they will be wise and strong. The young men are waiting for them, and their hearts are glad. Let not the words of Tanneron cause you to break the promise you have given them, that would be wrong to our young men, and make their song in battle as the song of a baby, and their arms as the arm of an old man. Let them see how the enemies of our people tremble and cry for mercy when the fire leaps up around them. You, the wise men of the Hurons, have promised that our eyes shall see this sight, keep your promise to us, for it is not good to break your word, and destroy the traditions of our people."

It was evident that the words of the bully had a great effect on his hearers. Several of those nearest to him nodded their heads, as if affirming the truth of his words, while some of the young men whooped their battle cry. They were ready to begin the tortures planned for the benefit of their young men. Tanneron was again rising, and in deference to him, the noise ceased. Raising his hand as if to command attention, he began to speak in a clear, loud and manly voice, the first words created a sensation, but that gradually died away as he proceeded.

"The white man is a dog, and speaks with the tongue of a snake, but his words are as the too-whoop of the owl, they mean nothing. The Hurons do wrong when they admit him to the councils of the Tribe, he would tell your words to your enemies for the skin of a fox. Who among you ever heard his voice raised in battle? Let me hear your voice? None, for he is like a dog who crawls on his belly under the tent when his master comes. Men of the Hurons, about two moons ago I was returning from the land of the Crows, my heart was glad, for I had learned to sing the song of my people in battle, and I was returning to tell them of the great things I had seen, and of the great things we could do, intending to lead our young men to war. I wore the clothing of a white man, because it was my desire to enter their settlements and see the things that would be well to know when we went on the war path.

"I met this man Mikel. This dog who told me he had been adopted as a Huron, and was known to your people as Mikel the Fox, so I trusted him—was he not a Huron, and the Hurons are all my friends? -Then he showed me the Totem of your people, and I trusted him and we were friends. Then he gave me a drink of the poison, rum he called it, it was good, and Mikel, the Huron, told me that it was harmless. I drank more rum, then more rum. I was a fool, and my step was like the step of a wounded deer, and my arm was not so strong as the arm of a baby. Then we entered the village where I offended him, he struck me, and rum had left me at his mercy. He would have killed me then, yes, he would have killed me like a wolf, had not the Great Spirit sent the man who is now a prisoner among the Hurons to save me. That man was brave and strong, and the face of manitou had not been turned away from him. And he whipped Mikel, even as a woman whips her son, and Mikel begged for mercy, and ran away from him, afraid to fight a man who was able to defend himself. And this man was Mikel the Huron, who ran like a cat before the hound, and the Hurons are of my people, for the Hurons and the Mohawks are brothers. Then listen not to his council, for the words of the dog are as the rum of the white man, they seem good but make the wise man a fool, and the warrior a baby. This man is not a Huron, or the Hurons cease to be my brothers, I have spoken."

The scorn of the speaker was felt in every word he uttered, the unspoken appeal to preserve the reputation of their tribe was keenly felt and irresistible. As Tanneron took his seat, Mikel attempted to arise with the evident intention of speaking, but was brushed aside by one of the older Chiefs, who began:

"Men of the Hurons, the snows of many winters have cut the leaves from the trees in the forest since I was able to follow the deer over the mountains and through the lowlands, near the lakes, and I am old. I was a young man

when many of your fathers crossed the mighty father of waters (the Mississippi River). And I am old. But old as I am, this is the first time I have ever known one of our Tribe, be he born a Huron or adopted by us, to be a coward and run from the enemy, or a traitor to the men of his own kind. The Great Spirit knows he is not a Huron, and my heart is glad."

Amidst the profoundest silence, the old Chief resumed his seat, and once again Mikel arose to speak in his own defence, but was this time interrupted by Tecumseth, who spoke sternly.

"The word of a Mohawk is enough. No other evidence is needed to convict this man of both treachery and cowardice. Then hear me, Mikel, for my words are the words of a Chief. You may go your own way now, but tomorrow if my young men find you in the forest, your scalp shall be dried at the camp fire of the Hurons. Go."

Then turning to me, he signalled me to approach. I knew that the crisis had arrived, but approached him laughing.

"Does the white man desire to return to his people?" he inquired.

The question was answered by Tanneron, before I could speak.

"Do the flowers on the hillside love the drops of rain that wet their roots at the close of a summer day?" he inquired. This answer pleased Tecumseth, and I could see his eye brighten.

"Then he may return to them as soon as he pleases. My young men will respect this totem." As he spoke he handed me an eagle feather, the center of it colored a deep red.

"Wear it in your hat, this way." As he spoke he placed it where it should be worn. I glanced toward the other prisoners, and Tanneron, divining my thoughts, spoke carelessly to Tecumseth.

"What will my brother do with the other prisoners?"

"They belong to our young men," he answered.

"They are friends of my white brother, and I will pay for them."

"How much will you give for each of the captives?"

"Tow ponies," Tanneron replied.

The look on the face of Tecumseth was one of amazement, but he really seemed to be in good humor.

"Not a very good price," he remarked.

"But more than they are worth to our young men."

"We will see." Turning around he held up his hands to secure attention, then spoke for some time to his audience, and watching Tanneron I could see a look of satisfaction on his face and in his eyes. Several questions were asked and answered by Tecumseth and his hearers, and sometimes the women who stood around laughed at some of the things that were said, this was particularly so when Tanneron said that two ponies were worth more than the maidens to the young men, and had great influence in the final arrangements. But at last Tecumseth turned to Tanneron, and demanded:

"How long before my brother can deliver the ponies." I whispered a few words to Tanneron, and he replied:

"In three days we will deliver the ponies to your young men, but they must go with us to receive them."

Now that the bargain had been concluded, Tanneron insisted that the trinkets belonging to the young men be restored to them, together with my arms, which none of them could use, lest my misfortune befall their possessor. Their superstitious belief that this would happen made this part of the bargain easy. They had taken nothing else from me, for everything I had was under the evil spell. The bonds were removed from the prisoners and Nannianna took the young women away with her, but returned soon. About this time, the woodsman who had interpreted the speeches for us called my attention to two braves who were just leaving the circle.

"They are going after Mikel, and the other men who left here when he did, and it is safe to say that they will not get very far from here, and a good thing it is too."

This prophecy proved true, for while I was talking with two of the girls, whom I had discovered to be the daughters of Mattias the Quaker, we were startled by the report of several fire arms, and a few moments later the braves returning, mingled with the rest, but at their side hung three fresh scalps. I afterwards discovered that the white men had mounted their horses and rode around the camp and were about to shoot at some of the Indians, who had already begun their sports to celebrate the wedding, but the braves prevented this act of treachery, and this was the end of Mikel.

I had ample opportunity to tell the quaker maids of their father, and comforted them as a friend might, and in this was assisted by the other prisoners, who spoke of the kindness of the Indian girl, Nannianna, to them.

I soon discovered that many of the Indians could speak English and more could speak good French, for they had considerable dealings in Canada. Tanneron and Tecumseth could speak and understand both languages.

Tanneron motioned for his bride to approach, and with great dignity presented her, then taking the lead, went toward the Chief's teepee.

"Nannianna is the sister of Tecumseth," he said as we entered the door. She went to school in Montreal, and is now the wife of Tanneron; now about my brother. Tecumseth knows that you are not under the evil spirit, I have told him so, but he tells his people that you are, but you must laugh at the young men and do not make them angry. Tecumseth is my brother, and will be your friend, because you are my brother. At sunrise we will ride together toward the home of my people, and my young men will help the white men and young women; does this please my brother?"

"Tanneron, you are a jewel," I answered, using one of Doctor Murphy's favorite expressions, "but there is one thing more I would like you to do for me."

"What does my brother ask of Tanneron?"

"Do you remember the Quaker who was with me the day I met you?"

"Tanneron never forgets."

"Two of the young women are his daughters. We must send two messengers to find him, so that he may meet us in the village where we will find the ponies."

"Tanneron already owns many ponies, and will not care for them."

"But my brother forgets that he will need the ponies soon, and I have more than enough to settle the score."

"Is my brother sure that he will not have to buy them?"

"Sure, yes indeed, and have many to spare."

"Good. Now we will get back to the people. But you must not forget to laugh, it was to tell you this I brought you here, for you had stopped laughing, and young men grow suspicious, and if you are not mad, they will remember the two young men you killed the day they met you in the forest. My young men will take the message to the quaker."

Tanneron had taken this method to discover my wishes regarding the rest of the prisoners, and at the same time to caution me. Needless to say, I laughed at everything during the remainder of my stay in the village. So that evening two young men, each carrying a talking paper, went in search of Mattias, telling him to meet us with the horses.

CHAPTER V.

It was several hours after sunrise when we left the Indian village, but at last we were on our way, with about a hundred Indians riding near us. Tanneron, Nannianna and myself rode in the rear of the entire party. As he explained many things regarding his people, I was surprised to learn that a Chief could not declare war without the consent of

his tribe. And even in any matter of great importance, must have the consent of the council before they recognized his acts as binding on them. This was a surprise to me, who had always thought that the will of the Chief was law.

I learned many things about them; the wedding I had witnessed was elaborate, owing to the standing of the bride and groom, the ceremony would be repeated when they arrived at the city of the Mohawks. Some of the brides-party being with us, others led by her brother Tecumseth, going by another route. At times I rode ahead to talk with some of the others, but always kept the daughters of Mattias near me. In fact they clung to me as if I were their own father, but for that matter they were welcome, for I always did love children.

We had stopped to rest our horses and eat our lunch, about noon of the third day after leaving the Huron village. The shade of the trees growing along the river bank afforded an excellent shelter from the rays of the sun shining so fiercely down upon us. The men were busy with the horses, and the women were assisting in cooking the meal.

Nannianna had grown very fond of the two quaker girls, the youngest of the two being several inches taller than herself, while the older one was a woman in everything but experience. As I lay in the shade, smoking my pipe, for the Indians had a good supply of tobacco, and thinking what tomorrow would bring to some of us, for I was thinking of the meeting between those of our party who had been so long in captivity. A shout from one of the young men drew my attention to a party of horsemen who were rapidly advancing, still about two miles away, but evidently coming in our direction.

At a glance I could see that they were United States Cavalry, although their horses behaved badly, but there were others in the party. Turning to Tanneron, I told him to call his young men together and leave the rest to me. This he started to do, when I left our camp and went to

meet the troops. As they approached, I rubbed my eyes for fear I did not see things as they should be, then as all doubt left my mind, I put my fingers to my lips and blew a whistle. It was a call for Marcus, my horse, and the leader of the troops was riding him. Scarcely had the sound left my lips, when I discovered that it was Colonel Blethen who led the troops, and that Marcus having heard the sound, had taken the bit in his mouth and was rapidly leaving the others, and coming in answer to my call.

It took only a few words to assure Blethen of the peaceful intentions of the party who accompanied us, and all the time I was petting my favorite who followed me around, and really seemed delighted to see me, and I was overjoyed to see him in good company. The rest of the party having arrived, I turned to meet Mattias the Quaker, but could tell at once he did not know the good news I brought him.

"I have had messengers searching for you for the last three days, have you met any of them?"

"Nay friend, verily we have been looking for thee in the fastness of the forest, and for some time have been far from the haunts of man."

Just then several of the young women discovered friends among the party and came running toward us, among them the daughters of Mattias. I could feel him tremble as they approached, and put my arm about him to sustain him, for his emotion had deprived him of the power to go to them. So they rushed into his arms, and amid their tears fairly smothered him with kisses.

The Indians now assured of the friendly intentions of the white men had drawn near, and seeing this I motioned for Tanneron and Nannianna to advance. A tear dimmed the eye of the bride, for she had witnessed the meeting of the Quaker and his daughters, and that tear only served to show the true nobility in the character, while her husband held her hand tightly clasped in his own. Indian though he was, he had the heart of a nobleman.

Mattias placed his hands on the shoulders of his daughters, and asked the simple question, "Art thou, art thou?" But he was unable to complete the question, and divining his meaning, the oldest girl replied:

"Yes, my father."

"O thou Great God of Israel, thus do I thank thee."

Kneeling down on the ground, Mattias and his daughters returned thanks for their deliverance. Many of the others also kneeled to return thanks with them. How he prayed for the good friends who had helped to save his children, be they white men or red, was something so sacred that it is impossible for me to describe.

I was watching Tanneron, too, for something in his attitude showed me that he was greatly interested. At the conclusion of the prayer, the quakers began to sing, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." This hymn was sung then as I never heard it since, by hearts that were overflowing, and strong men wiped the tears from their eyes as they sung.

It was a democratic party, and a very good natured one too that ate their lunch that day under the shade of the trees on the bank of the river, white men and red men doing all in their power to make it agreeable for each other. Mattias soon discovered that Nannianna had protected his daughters from insult or injury, and that while she had been unable to secure their liberty before that time, she had planned with Tanneron to set them free.

Tecumseth had given orders that the girls should be treated with respect, so that his young men might be proud of them, and complying with this command, the worst that had happened to them was the continued restraint of their liberty, for well did his people know the savage nature of their Chief when once aroused and no one dared to oppose his will. The girls had been kept in another village about two miles from the one where I resided, which accounted for the fact that I had not met them before.

Tanneron, too, had been instrumental in this result, while he had no suspicion that they were in any manner related to any one who had ever befriended him. But he was very much in love with Nannianna and easily won over to support her appeal for mercy. He did not know that I was one of the prisoners, until he passed me, then he did not interfere until the proper time, when he could urge his claim. Tecumseth, for some reason of his own, had helped the lovers in the plot to secure our liberty.

The other young women found warm, true-hearted friends in the relief party, and after we separated I saw them no more. But the two Hunters or woodsmen, I was destined to travel with for several days.

"Friend, thou hast a good horse there," pointing to Marcus. "Late on the day when thee wast taken, he arrived at the home of our friend Job. This caused the greatest excitement in the village because of the fear they entertained of another attack, but as it did not materialize, they became greatly interested in thy fate. Yea, verily, they sent woodsmen to search the forest for thee, but at last arrived at the conclusion that thou wert dead. One of these men, meeting Colonel Blethen and his party, told the tale of thy death. The Colonel, having great faith in the sagacity of Marcus, sent to the village after him. Your horse led the troops, and went direct to the place where thy trouble began, but from there we lost all trace of thee."

I was so proud of this display of intelligence on the part of Marcus, that I uttered a low whistle, and in a moment he was beside me. Tanneron stood looking wistfully at him, while Nannianna patted his fine neck and breast.

"Good horse," said Nannianna.

"Dam good horse," said Tanneron, more vehemently. The words and the unusual show of interest in the horse, started a laugh at the remarks of the pair.

"We followed the trail left behind by the Indians when they captured you, and with more or less success, too, but

the troop horses were unable to keep up with this old Centaur of yours, and I had all I could manage to keep him from forging ahead. We left the village three days ago, but here comes more company now," remarked Blethen.

"Nothing strange about that," I answered, "it is our good friend Job, who is bringing the horses I promised to pay. I sent a message to him two days ago, being afraid that another messenger would be unable to meet our friend Mattias, and bring him here."

My surmise proved correct, for in a short time Job and about twenty others, each leading ponies, rode up. The number of horses being greater than I agreed to pay, I presented them to Tanneron, who in turn presented them to his young men, after paying his debt to the Hurons.

It was late in the afternoon when we again resumed our journey, Tanneron and his followers going in a northerly direction, while our destination was south and east. There were tears in the eyes of the young women, as they bid farewell to Nannianna, while Tanneron received many gifts from the white men that I felt sure he would prize all the rest of his life. The last thing that took place on that campground, was another prayer by Mattias, at which we all knelt, even some of the Indians following the example of the white men, although, perhaps, they did not know why.

There were many farewell signals waved in token of friendship as the two parties moved away, these were continued at intervals until they lost sight of each other.

Scouts had been sent ahead to the village announcing as nearly as possible the time we would arrive there, and although the distance was not more than twenty miles, it was late at night when we arrived, but the good people of the place had a good supper prepared for all of us. Nor was this all, bon-fires had been kindled and kept burning, speeches were being made, a general air of rejoicing prevailed.

I had seen many brilliant receptions in honor of some favorite friend or ruler, some great celebrations where the

wealth of nations was freely spent in honor of some returning heroes, but I had never seen anything like this before. The troops were greeted with cheers, but the young women were welcomed with a wealth of affection, that cannot exist in any heart unless they too have felt that soul destroying anxiety that is so inseparable from the life of the western pioneer. The excitement continued until early morning, but at last nature asserted itself, and the people retired to their homes, to rest if not to sleep.

When I awoke next day I was startled to hear that Washington had been taken by the British troops under General Ross, and that the city had been taken with little or no opposition, save that which could be offered by a handful of militia, and a few volunteers. We were highly indignant at the wilful destruction of the fine public buildings then in the course of construction, but as our own army had been guilty of similar outrages on the Canadian side, we had only been repaid in kind. But such is civilized war, no matter how noble the purposes that caused it, there is sure to be some breach, something done, or left undone, that brings reproach to one side or the other.

This information caused me to change my plans materially. Instead of going to Washington direct before I joined General Jackson, I started for Philadelphia, for I had been told that I would find the President and his cabinet there.

We were in no hurry so we did not start our journey until the morning of the second day. Blethen and his troops had returned to Buffalo the day before. Everything seemed to favor us on the trip, the weather was cool, the scenery lovely, my companions jolly, and I was happy. But how I did long for my old friend Murphy. He was somewhere in Virginia, the Vernets lived there, and I was on my way to Virginia.

True I had to call at Philadelphia, but I had an idea that I would not stay there very long. Ed and Joe Mack, my companions, were thorough woodsmen, and as their names

would indicate, brothers. They were born witty, and the way they told stories of the woods was so funny that it hardly seemed more than an hour between daylight and dark. They knew every short cut, too, or if they did not know it, their instinct led them to follow it and so we made splendid time, for as we unsaddled our horses on the night of the third day out, Joe remarked that we ought to reach the city before noon of the next day.

We had been in the habit of securing a supply of sandwiches at the different towns as we passed through, and travelling as far as possible before camping for the night. But this night we were stopping at the hotel for several reasons. First, it had already grown dark when we reached it, and second, a party of British soldiers were known to be in the neighborhood, and we thought it best to travel by daylight to avoid them. As I sat on the edge of my bed that night, for some reason I began to think of home, and was in great hopes that tomorrow in Philadelphia I would receive a bundle of letters that would delight me. Thinking thus, I opened the miniature of Emilie D'Mendon and told the picture a few things I had never told to the original, but that was a habit of mine, it is easy so to form silly habits.

Closing the picture, I dropped it under my shirt and crossed to the window to look out. The moon had appeared above the house tops, filling the valley with light. Outside everything looked calm and peaceful, and save the croaking song of the bullfrogs in the pond behind the house, not a sound could be heard. I raised my window and retired, and as I did, a glimpse of the smiling face of Marcellie Vernet floated across my mind. I will soon be with her; it was joy even to think of it. The surroundings of the Vernet home lent an enchantment to the mental picture. The long line of trees leading to the gate, the fine gravel walks, the flower beds scattered here and there without regularity, the song of the birds, the hum of the bees, the shouts of the children at play, all held my soul enwrapped in a spirit of blissful

forgetfulness of everything else. I could see the bright sunlight playing among the tree leaves, while afar off I heard the hammering of a wood-pecker as he searched for his meal beneath the bark-bound side of the monarch of the forest.

From one thing to another my fancies flitted with ever increasing rapidity and I was unable to drive away the spell and go to sleep. Angry at myself, I arose and filled my pipe, seating myself in the window to enjoy the comforting influences of a smoke, gazing aimlessly along the country road. How long I remained in this position I could hardly tell, but suddenly the scene became interesting to me. I knocked the fire out of my pipe and securing my glasses gazed earnestly at about two hundred horsemen. There could be no mistake, they were British soldiers.

I saw them dismount and picket their horses, but as they did not unsaddle them I knew they were only waiting a while before beginning their attack on the town. It took only a few moments to awaken the inmates of the house, and in a few moments men began to assemble on the town square, while the women and children loaded with household effects moved away to a place of safety. I at once dispatched Joe and Ed Mack to watch the troops, and report the first signs of activity, then assumed command of the people of the town, many of whom were members of the militia, and prepared a surprise for the uninvited visitors who had planned to take the town. So far as I had discovered we greatly outnumbered them, but relying on the surprise of the attack, and the training of his men, the British leader was about to undertake a task that would have been doubtful at any time, but under present conditions impossible for the forces at his command.

There was quite a forest of trees and underbrush growing on the south side of the road just east of the town, and just across the road from this a long line of fields and pasture lands, extending for miles behind the town, the road running between two lines of fence left ample room for

cavalry to ride eight abreast without crowding each other. It was toward this growth of trees I led my men, after explaining my plans to them. We would use the fence and trees as a mask to conceal ourselves and await for the coming of the enemy, while another force under the command of the Mayor, would be awaiting at the edge of the town to prevent any dash that might be made in that direction. Then all our plans being understood, we began to wait.

To the untrained man this is always the most trying time. It is then his mind is free to think of the horrors of war, and the possibilities of death, and if at all timid, it is then he deserts and leaves those of sterner fibre, to dare and do all that must be done, all that must be borne; and this feeling of timidity is not cowardice, for the same man who would run before the battle would charge a battery with a cheer as soon as the first shot had been fired. Knowing this, I kept them moving from place to place, giving them no opportunity to be idle, joking with them about what was going to happen to the British, and making them forget, as far as possible, the stern duties that waited them. It never grew quite dark that night, and just before daybreak Ed Mack brought the news that the enemy had several cannon, and had entered the field with them. I realized that their intention was to make a demand for the surrender of the town and by a display of power overawe the people into submission, so passed the news to my men, after sending simple directions to the Mayor.

It was now daylight, and we could see the movements of the enemy, although our position in the woods prevented them from seeing us. On they came, the cavalry in the road slightly in the rear of the artillery in the field. At a short distance from us they began to unlimber the artillery. Several shots from the Mayor's party having warned them that this was going to be a contested fight. Although the shots fell short of the British they had the desired effect, for the troopers, with a show of courage I had never seen wanting

in their ranks, put spurs to their horses and galloped toward the town. What a pity to shoot into their ranks without warning, I thought, at the same time I sprang to my feet and shouted the word of command. Scarcely had the word been given when the roar of muskets awoke the forest, and with shrieks of agony, horse and rider plunged high in the air, only to fall bleeding and dying in the dust of the road. The troop horses, startled at the sudden sheet of flame, turned and regardless of the efforts of their riders, bolted in different directions, and went quite a distance before they could be controlled.

With a cheer we broke from the cover of the woods and charged toward the cannon. There were only four pieces of artillery here, but enough to do all that was required of them if they had been in service. Over half of the gun crews took to their heels and ran as we approached them, but the others who remained excited my most earnest admiration; here we were fully fifty times their number, racing toward them, yet they fired their muskets as we ran. It was well for us that they did not have time to get their battery into action. In less time than it takes to tell it, they were overpowered and made prisoners.

It was then I felt a burning sensation in the region of my breast and knew that I had been wounded, but had no time to think of that, as the British were reforming about a half mile away, and giving every evidence of renewing the combat.

Among the men in my command were a number who understood the handling of artillery, which we now turned upon the advancing enemy. On they came, and as they came they gave voice to a cheer, the last that many of them ever uttered, for with the discharge of the cannon, horse and men fell, never to rise again. We had improved the time to reload our muskets, and answered their fire with one far more effective than that sent in our direction, the movement of their horses interfering with their marksmanship. "How

gallantly they charge," I thought, "and how bravely my men face them." This courage was very gratifying to me. Still, I knew that our situation was a desperate one, every trooper had a drawn saber and was mounted; our men must face them with unwieldy gun barrels, and on foot. I could feel the blood running down my face and neck from a bullet that had not been fired in vain, also I received another bullet in the shoulder, and was growing weaker when the Mayor and his men arrived. Their guns were still loaded, and as they fired at short range, I staggered and fell, just as I heard the bugle sound retreat. Oh how delightful the sound of the bugle, away off in the distance, so far away I could scarcely hear the low, sweet, plaintive sound.

CHAPTER VI.

In some manner I could discern the arm of a man hanging on the wall of my room. Yes, and there was a leg alongside of it. I knew that they belonged to me, although I was greatly puzzled to know how they ever got over there. I lay watching them for hours at a time, sometimes pleading with them to come to me, and at other times threatening them with dire misfortune if I went for them. Still they remained there, hanging in plain view of any person who entered the room, always in sight, continually mocking me. Gradually they began to fade away, and at last disappeared entirely from view. That was on the day I became conscious of my surroundings, and opened my eyes to gaze on the well-loved face of Dr. Murphy. I cannot say I was surprised to see him there. Somehow I knew that he was with me all the time, good old Murphy, he never failed me when I needed him.

The first question I tried to ask was one regarding my

hallucinations. At the same time I felt of my arms and was gratified to find them both where they belonged, although I was unable to reach down to my knees to assure myself of the safety of my legs.

"It's a devil of a time you have had, Roul, and a devil of a time we all had, who tried to do anything for you. Now just be decent and lie still, and I'll tell you all you want to know if you don't say a word at all. In the first place, you are all here. You lost nothing at all, but about all the blood you had in you, which is no excuse for behaving as badly as you did. There were several poor fellows who lost their heads entirely, but they never made any fuss about it at all, mind that now, and let it teach you better manners. In the second place, it was a fine bit of a fight and our men won, for which the Mayor and the town council, and the people, are waiting until you are able to receive them, so that they may thank you with fitting ceremonies, for the part you played in the heroic defence of the town. And to tell the truth, they are about ready to assassinate me for keeping you from them so long. Now just take a few swallows of this broth the good woman has prepared for you, and go to sleep." This as an elderly lady approached with a bowl and spoon. There might have been broth in the bowl at some time in the past, but there was very little, if any, there now. I grumbled at the present scarcity, for I was always fond of good eating, and liked plenty of it.

"Now just listen to the man grumbling because there is no more to give him, when you and I both know there was enough in that bowl to fatten a pig."

She smiled at the Doctor's remarks, as she smoothed my pillow and laying the sheets across my breast, left the room. In a few moments I fell asleep. The leg and arm had disappeared from the wall and haunted me no more. But I had plenty of time to dream now, and being of a sanguine temperament, enjoyed the period of my convalescence to the

limit, the Doctor or Mrs. Radley, the nurse, interfering occasionally. Their ministrations always razed the castles I was building in the air, but then I enjoyed rebuilding them.

Among the most pleasing pictures of my fancies was the picture of a plantation in Virginia, near some stream of water and a home surrounded by magnolias, and shall I confess it?—a wife, a true-hearted, loving woman, a wife who would be at once my companion and sweetheart, for although I had very little experience with women, the softly spoken compliments which I had heard from pretty, pouting lips, and the droop of the eyes in confusion, when the challenge so often given has been met by one more daring. The blushes that appeared on the cheeks, or the tear that sometimes dimmed the lovely eye, had made a great impression on my mind. And while I am making this confession, I may as well say that I had acknowledged to myself, but to no one else, that I was in love; so I resolved to take one person into my confidence and tell her so.

I was growing stronger, but the wound in my shoulder was not healing as rapidly as it might. The severed bone in my leg was doing well though, and all together I had no cause to complain. The Doctor left nothing undone that would add to my comfort and Mrs. Radley was the best nurse I had ever had.

Madam Didier and Bridgey had returned to Philadelphia and the Doctor spent a great deal of his time with them. But as he always brought back the latest news, I quite forgave him for leaving me. I felt considerable resentment toward the women, as they had not been out to see me yet, and the distance was less than twenty miles. The Doctor had been away two days now and I was propped up in bed awaiting his return. The sun was shining brightly through the open window, just outside a mocking bird had perched on a tree and was whistling the sweetest notes I had ever listened to. Unconsciously I began to whistle in answer to the bird, for I possessed remarkable qualities in that direction.

A carriage driving up to the door drove the bird away, and in a few moments I heard the voices of Bridgey and Madam Didier as they approached my room. I had prepared the speech that I intended to overwhelm them with, prepared it with great care, and was waiting them as they entered the room, feeling sure they would be duly contrite, and—What the D—was that the Doctor was carrying in his arms?—as he passed the women and came proudly toward me. A bunch of something all white and fluffy. I was amazed. I had seen something like it before, it was a baby. Gently the proud father laid it in my lap, and then stood back enjoying the bewilderment so apparent in my face and actions. The baby looked up, and, was it a fancy of mine, or did it smile at me?

"Roul, I want you to become acquainted with your namesake. By heavens, man, see, he knows you already, and is reaching for you like a pointer pup after a piece of beef."

This speech created considerable fun for the two women who now advanced to take the baby from me, and, like two small children, began to quarrel good-naturedly over his possession.

"Roul, my boy, you see I have been very busy—"

Madam Didier shrieked aloud at this beginning, while Bridgey turned away smiling, but he continued:

"Since you were hurt, what with taking care of you here, and Bridgey in the city, my hands have been full all the time and he was born when you were too weak to realize anything about it, so I just held my peace, intending to surprise you as we have today, and a blessed moment it has been too for me."

I reached my hand out to him but that did not satisfy me, so calling Bridgey to our circle, we clasped the hands of each other and Madam Didier came forward and joined us, around the young monarch who had taken a place in my heart that day, and though no words were spoken the hand clasp was a pledge of our eternal interest in the wel-

fare of Roul St. Armand Murphy. It was a very happy day for all of us, and as we discussed the possibilities of that baby. Nothing else seemed to have any place in our minds until late in the afternoon, when the Doctor realizing this produced a parcel of letters and handed them to me, at the same time remarking:

"Sure I am glad that Roul Murphy was not a pair of them. If he had been twins, I never would have thought of anything else in this life of mine, judging from what has happened today, and for that matter from the day he was born. Now we will leave you to read your letters in peace."

One of the letters was from D'Sayre, a warm, friendly letter, giving me a great deal of political news and telling me how happy he was since he had been relieved of all the cares of his office, and urging me to return to France and visit them. The Countess, too, inclosed a note urging my return and concluding with the words, "we will gladly welcome you as a brother, for you are the only one on earth who ever was a brother's to me. So come when you can."

I was greatly pleased with this letter and the next one I opened only added to my pleasure. It was from Jean and Marie, a long rambling letter, setting forth in detail all the army news, which he well knew would have the greatest of interest for me. And by a strange coincidence I read of the birth of another boy who was to bear my name, the son of Jean and Marie. The closing paragraph in this letter was very flattering, so I read it over again.

"We are going to christen him on the second Sunday in November, and nothing would please us so well as to have you here to act as Godfather to our boy. You know you promised long ago to come, so you must keep your promise, Roul, it means so much to us. I know you will not fail."

I read this letter over again, and then broke the seal of the letter from home. It was the sweetest, dearest and most encouraging letter I have ever read, but as in the case of the two which preceded it, I will only refer to the closing

paragraphs, which I read to the Doctor who entered the room just as I finished reading it.

"Now my dear boy, I have no words that would be adequate to tell you how greatly I appreciate the company of Emilie D'Mendon. She has been a pillar of strength during the trying periods of your father's illness. Someone has truly said that the old must give way to the young, and the truth of this saying was graven deeply on my mind by the attendance and devotion of Emilie D'Mendon, who was nurse, and almost constant companion to your dear father, who sincerely believes that he owes his life to her ministrations. She has taken him out for a drive while I am writing to you. This young lady is one of your friends, although we never met her until the day you sailed. Still, she is a source of great comfort to us all, and your father's best man in his business relations. You, of course, are acquainted with her, but you do not know her as we do. I think you should come home, for we need you here. We are growing old.- Must we die and go to the grave without first having a little time to know and enjoy our son who was restored to us in so marvelous a manner? You owe it to us and to the dear, good woman who loves you as her own your fostermother. I know you will not let us plead in vain, but come to the hearts that love you, my boy, you must return, come home for a while.

Your loving Mother,

Countess St. Armand.

The Doctor having finished the reading of the letters, gazed for a moment at nothing, before he said:

"There is a party by the name of Murphy, yes Roul, and he thinks a great deal of you, who would advise you, as a friend, to listen to the plea of that good old mother, and go home. Go home, Roul, go home and comfort them. You owe it to them, man, what are you thinking about? You did everything that could be done for Napoleon. You even took up arms in the defense of America, and in a manner

you obeyed his orders to the letter. You can do nothing here and for that matter you will be confined to civil life for at least six months to come. So go home, Roul, and Bridgey and myself will go with you, as none of us are needed here."

"What will you do with the property you have bought if you go with me?" I enquired.

"The property in Didier's hands will increase in value and I have already made arrangements with him to take care of it, as I contemplated a holiday of this kind for us both. Aside from that if the Emperor ever escapes from Elba, he will need every able bodied man he can get his hands on."

How my heart bounded as I heard this thought expressed by my friend. Napoleon might escape, and if he did, he would need me. This thought decided me. I would go home, home to France, home to Mother.

"You always have your way, Doctor, and this time the same as on all others. How long do you think it will be before we are able to start?"

in a matter of about two weeks or thereabouts. By the way,

"Well, that depends entirely upon you, but I should say Roul, I received a package for you from Buffalo and took the privilege of unwrapping it. It was the sword the good people there gave you, and a beauty it is too, but you will soon have enough of them if you keep on at this rate. And making the allowance due you for the satisfaction of your own conceit, they are all fine blades and well worth saving, for they would make fine surgical instruments, at least any one of them could cut off a man's head with a single blow, and never hurt the blade by so much as a nick."

"We are going to stay with you tonight, so after supper we will all come up and visit you for a while. Bridgey brought her violin and guitar, so we will have some music."

I was now indulging in a very pleasant reverie. For a moment I could see the Emperor again leading the Battalions of France. I heard the deep roar of the cannons

and the cheers of my comrades. Sometimes as there came a lull in this, I could hear the bands playing our favorite quickstep, so great was the hope inspired by the few words spoken at random by the Doctor.

But this train of thought was broken by the entrance of my friends with their musical instruments, and thus passed a very pleasant evening, for I always did love music, and the violin in the hands of Bridgey seemed to while away the time. so sweet it's sound of melody and song, and she was a fine performer, too.

Two weeks is not a long time to wait, but to one as impatient as I was it seemed to pass slowly, in fact they seemed to be never ending weeks, but the Doctor assured me that it would be impossible for me to undertake the trip before that time, even if we could secure passage on one of the packets that left before that time, which was extremely doubtful; but I know that he had everything arranged before he allowed me to leave the house at all, and then he suddenly moved me to Philadelphia, just two days before we were to sail for France.

Almost the first person I met on my arrival in Philadelphia was Sandy Watson, good old Sandy, but considerably altered since I saw him last. The Doctor had not told me of it, but Sandy had lost his right leg, and was now walking on crutches, waiting for the time he could discard them and annex a wooden leg. I learned too that the Doctor had been wounded in the same battle, and for the first time knew the reason that Murphy was on hand when I needed him. Sandy was a mine of information, for he also told me of the rumored engagement of Mercelli Vernet and Captain Archibald Lee of Virginia, but he was not sure that it was true. This piece of information set me thinking seriously; all my friends were getting married, so I began to think there was more danger in a pair of woman's eyes than there was in a whole battery of the enemy. Those pleasant glances were nearly as effective as the glancing of bullets, and the

smiles so winsom were like a demand for surrender, and talking of surrender, Sandy had capitulated, and was about to be married, for being in his crippled condition he could not very well escape the young woman who had stipulated the terms, and they were nothing short of unconditional surrender.

Time goes on, and no matter how we try to avoid them, each day brings us new duties to fulfill, new cares to overcome, and perhaps adds another line to the face. One, too, that we might have avoided had we only known how. We gaze into the eyes of a friend today, but tomorrow there remains only a memory of one we held dear. This was exactly the case on the eve of our departure for France. Madam Didier had invited a number of friends to entertain us. Some of them real friends too, and perhaps we were parting with them for the last time, forever. This thought is not always a cheering one, and for myself, I can truly say, it was more distressing than pleasing, but man is only a creature of customs, and on such occasions it is the custom to appear happy, no matter though the heart may be heavy; but at last the final good-bye had been spoken, and we were once more on the ocean, this time homeward bound.

CHAPTER VII.

How my heart thrilled as I saw the first faint outline of the shore, and knew that soon, very soon, I would be once more in the home of my father. The voyage had been a slow and uneventful one, and we were glad to set our feet on land again, even though we were unable to overcome that strange feeling of being still at sea, for several days after we were on shore. The wound on my leg still bothered me, and for that reason I would not consent to the Doctor's

plan to visit Paris before going home, but decided to lay over in Havre for a few days, as my leg had been giving me considerable trouble and the Doctor had advised this.

The Doctor was busy with Bridgey and Roul, Jr., and I had nothing to do but kill time, so I went to the lobby of the hotel and lost myself in the curling rings that ascended from my pipe. What wondrous visions I could see as I looked into the clouds that arose in the air and what wondrous castles I was building in them. I have often asserted and proved to my own satisfaction, although perhaps, no one else would have agreed with me, that the greatest half of all earthly pleasure were the pleasures seen through the variegated rings arising from the bowl of a good strong pipe. Yes, and that same pipe would destroy as many of our troubles as we brought to it, so barring the occasional twinge in the bones of my leg, I was lost to every earthly sense. Gradually at first, but surely, I began to take note of the things transpiring around me, and to catch a word or two of conversation of several men at a table near me, and turning my head I discovered that they were military men and discussing a subject of importance to themselves.

"Too bad!" exclaimed one of them, "To lose Lascelles just at the time he was most needed, it was really the turning point of the battle. But then the fates were against us, and the allies were not slow to discover the weakness and confusion in our ranks when he fell, and before we could recover from the shock, our right was broken and we were retreating in disorder."

"But where was LeClaire, you remember him, the young Captain we followed so often and had so much faith in him that we were always ready to follow, where he was? Surely he too was not killed at the same time. I heard that he had been promoted."

"Ah mon Comrade, there you are. LeClaire had been promoted, it is true, but he had also been assigned to special duty and he was not with us that day, he was a great

favorite with both Ney and Soult, and his commanding officer, Lascelles, was ever ready to lend an ear to his schemes and plans, and he was worthy of it too, and that is the reason we have been invited here tonight. For as is their custom, the officers of the 12th give a reception once a year, in honor of their General LeClaire, who gained a mysterious influence over them in some manner that others have not been able to understand. And so tonight at the Hotel LaRouche we will meet many of both the 10th and the 12th, for they fraternize like one regiment now."

"And will LeClaire be with us at the banquet?"

"No, he is still in America, but that makes no difference to them, their hearts are with him wherever he is."

"Well, here's to the 12th anyway," said another as he filled the glasses, "Here's to the regiment of heroes, may they never suffer defeat or such loss as they sustained at the Battle of All Nations."

I would gladly have drained a glass with them in response to this toast, but the personal nature of their conversation prevented my exposing my identity, and I was a stranger to them anyway. For that matter, I hardly thought that any of my friends would recognize me, for I was considerably thinner than I was when I left France, and the scar on my face altered my appearance to a great extent. But I was going to that banquet. At least that was my intention. And I would have no time to spare if I did, for it was already seven o'clock. I hurried upstairs to change my dress, but I could not explain in a life time the pleasant sensations that thrilled me as I thought of the dear friends who paid this honor to me.

The wine that sparkles brightest in our glass sometimes leaves the bitterest taste in the mouth. So on this occasion I felt flattered to the extreme, but my pleasure was to a great extent annulled as I thought of the death of my friend, General Lascelles. I had not heard of it before, and felt keenly the loss of a friend who had always ad-

vanced my interests and screened me from the inevitable results of any youthful follies that would have spoiled my chances, had they been discovered in certain quarters.

Hurrying to the hotel, I was lucky enough to intercept the Doctor just as he was going for what he called his evening exercise. And by the way, this same exercise had been the cause of several lectures, freely given by the mate of his heart in the privacy of their own apartments. Grasping him by the arm, I hurried up the stairs, half dragging him, as he seemed inclined to go the other way.

"Are you clean daft, Roul, or is it only taking leave of your senses you are?"

I explained the situation to him as I began to dress, but with his usual quick perception he understood it in a minute. In a few moments he had explained everything to Bridgely, and we were on our way.

As we entered the lobby of the hotel where the banquet was to be held, a guard of soldiers stopped us, and demanded our invitations. As we had none to give, the sergeant was called. He chanced to be one of those who had known me, and recognized me in an instant, but refused to allow me to enter until he had announced our presence. It was only a moment after he left us when the door was thrown open and several officers rushed out to embrace us and ask a thousand questions, without giving us a chance to answer a single one of them. But in a few moments another officer came from the room and signalled us to enter.

I have heard the wild huzzas of troops in action, the ear splitting screech and the awe inspiring war cry of the Indians, but nothing I had ever heard could compare with the noise and shouts that greeted our entrance among them. For genuine noise, nothing can equal that produced by a good-natured crowd of Frenchmen when they have had several glasses of wine, which they already had, as the Doctor and I were late to arrive. Nor were the men alone in this, for the shrill soprano of women's voices joined in the noise.

It was some time before the programme was begun, and to be real truthful about it, it was never finished as it was intended to be finished, for some of those who were to sing or speak were in no condition to do so when their turn came, although they firmly believed they could sing and several of them tried to prove it.

I made several promises to rejoin them at an early date, my grade being assured to me, for although the Emperor had been exiled and a different order of politics established, nearly all the officers who desired to remain in the army had been confirmed in their respective grades.

How I did enjoy that evening among my friends, many of them having fought at my side. For a goodly representation from the 10th was there, and needless to say, the Doctor who lost no opportunity to tell a story, told them the story of my captivity among the Indians and created considerable merriment at my expense. He described several instances, some wholly fictitious; for instance, he told them that Nannianna and I had fallen deeply in love with each other. This he declared was the reason I had been spared from the torture of the stake. But that Tanneron had asserted an owner's right and married the Indian girl in time to prevent me from proving that I was an insane as the Indians believed me to be. But when he told them of my sending two fine horses to Tanneron and Nannianna from Philadelphia, he dwelt on the incident longer than was necessary, although they were two of the best I could find, and the trappings were the best and most showy I could purchase in America.

It was broad daylight when the party disbanded, and I was delighted to hear what Bridgely told the Doctor on our return to the hotel about a married man who stayed away from his wife and baby all night. In a manner she evened the score between us, but that afternoon when I awoke they were as happy as two lambs at play.

"I was thinking, Roul, that we might start for the Chateau St. Armand in the morning."

"Now you are speaking as I like to hear you speak, Doctor, so let us start early."

"Providing you will agree to ride slowly," he continued.

"Agreed! Doctor, I will agree to anything you want me to, only let us make the start, it will take nearly two days to get there."

So the next day we left Havre shortly after breakfast. All of us being inside of a roomy coach, built for such trips as the one we were now on, with four good horses hitched to it, and my own Marcus following behind, I felt a keen, pleasant excitement as we rolled merrily along the road. The day was a little chilly, making it necessary for us to wrap ourselves well with the robes.

"Do you remember that hill over yonder, Roul?" enquired the Doctor.

I started and looked around as he spoke. I was so completely enamored by my own thoughts I had paid no attention to either time or place and had very little idea of where we were. But being thus recalled to myself, I gazed out of the window just as I felt the hand of the Doctor seize my own.

"It is neptune hill," I answered, "where we had a pretty little action one day about eight or nine years ago."

"You are right, Roul, it was there you and I first became acquainted. I was a lucky man that day, too."

Bridgey, who had been nursing Roul, Jr., adjusted the robes around the sleeping infant, and smiling fondly at him, said softly:

"Now, baby dear, papa is going to tell us a story about how he met and became acquainted with Uncle Roul."

Then she looked at the Doctor in a manner that commanded and coaxed at the same time. It was a way she had with the Doctor, and I had always known him to do exactly what she wanted him to do when she looked at him that way. I settled back in the seat and relit my pipe, for I could see by the manner of the Doctor that he was in the humor to tell the story.

"You see, Bridget darling, after you left Ireland I was lonesome and every day of my life I went around with my head hanging on one side for all the world like a sick pup. doing my best to discover where you had gone, and meeting as much success in this as I could readily expect if I had been chasing a mermaid. I was becoming so thin that I could very easily have been mistaken for an Irish budget prepared by the House of Lords. You see I loved you all the time, dear, but I never knew it until you were gone. Well in this state of mind, is it any wonder that I drifted across the channel? for I believed you had forever vanished, and despaired of finding you. I at last became convinced that the very best thing I could do was to join the army. And perhaps following the fortunes of Napoleon, I would stop some friendly bullet that would put an end to my earthly troubles before I went entirely mad.

"Well it was about here somewhere that I overtook the troops, and had no trouble in getting appointed as an unattached Surgeon. And it was not long before I began to hear the wildest stories about the 10th. I soon found out that they were about the worst ruffians in the service. Nothing that you could think of that they would not do. Storm a castle with the same easy grace that they would steal a hen or stop a bullet with their heads, and cheat the devil almost as neatly as they would kiss their sweetheart, and in half an hour afterwards be making desperate love to her sister. Oh! what a fine reputation was theirs, and they deserved it too.

"From the stories told by the wounded men, I soon began to know the officers of the regiment, although I met very few of them, for any of them who were injured were being looked after by a real doctor. Be that as it may, those who came under my charge improved so rapidly that I began to receive calls to attend the officers who were just a bit envious of the men. This naturally created some jealousy among the other surgeons and it was not long be-

fore I found they avoided me as if I were a leper, and the greater my success the more jealous they became.

"I was not aware that I was the object of ridicule at the mess table, for seldom did I find time to eat with the other officers of the troop, and little did I think that any one there had the least bit of friendly regard for me, or for that matter, friendly interest, until I was called to dress the wounds of one of the surgeons, who, but a few hours before had denounced me as a charlatan. His wounds were serious, but he recovered so rapidly that he expressed his surprise, and in a burst of gratitude told me he had been denouncing me in very positive language, when one of the Lieutenants, a very young man, had defended me, and had made some very caustic remarks. The doctor had fancied himself insulted and challenged the young man to fight. He being a very fine swordsman felt sure he could carve the Lieutenant just as neatly as if he had him on an operating table, but the younger man did the carving, and a fine job it was too. Just three deep, painful wounds, all of which were made before they had fairly began the duel, proving to the doctor that all the butchers in the camp were not dignified with the letters M. D. after their name.

"As I said before, the doctor improved rapidly under my treatment and became a warm personal friend. But it was at the battle of Neptunes Hill I met the Lieutenant who had fought my fight. Soult's Division had camped near the place we just passed, and the 10th was a part of that division. We had no idea the Prussians were anywhere near us and seemed to be waiting to join Ney's Division, where the Emperor was at that time. It was early in the morning and we were still at breakfast when the first gun was fired. We thought for an instant that some sentry had accidentally discharged his gun, but the next instant knew better. Soult always was a wary old fox, and on this occasion the only thing they gained was the surprise. For in less than two minutes after the first gun was fired we were at them in

earnest, giving them a little more than they were able to give us. Our regiment was on the left and for some reason we were held out of the fight, although Soult used to put us in the front every time he could.

"This was my first smell of battle, and naturally I was nearly frightened to death. But as I saw no one falling in our ranks, I soon gained control of my legs. Just in time, too; for the cowardly things almost ran away with me. I noticed the absolute indifference of the men, and the apparent carelessness of the officers, just in time to prevent my making a fool of myself."

"Tell the story right, Doctor," I exclaimed. "This is the truth, Bridgey, he stood looking on as if he wanted to join the troops already in action. This for the time being denied him, he produced a villianous black pipe and I was sure of it that he created almost as much smoke in front of the tent as there was on any other part of the battlefield. But at last our turn came to get into action. We were ordered to displace or capture a battery of guns the Prussians had posted on Neptunes Hill, and away we went. I had always led in charges of this kind before, but this time the Doctor rode at my side. Only a fool I thought would do a thing like that, why in the name of common sense does he not stay behind the troops, where he belongs?"

I looked at the Doctor as I said this, and caught him bestowing a wink on Bridgey, or perhaps he was winking at Roul, Jr., whichever it was I stopped speaking and relit my pipe which had gone out.

"Go on, Roul, you are doing fine, I never knew you could tell a story so nicely." He said this as if to encourage me, but I was obstinate now, and paid no attention to him, but interested myself in Roul, Jr., who had awakened and was laughing good naturedly at me.

"Well then, to begin where Roul left off, I thought the man at my side was mad, he laughed every blessed minute, and never a check in his laugh, unless it was to give a word

of command. Then the idea came to me that he was laughing at me, and I got mad, made as a wet hen, to think that a boy like that would make fun of me, was more than I could stand, so I gritted my teeth to keep from saying something I might be sorry for, but at last I could stand it no longer, so I gritted my teeth and shouted in his face, 'Come on you devil, let us see who is the best man, the Irish Doctor or the French dandy.' He made no reply to this, in fact, he had no time to do so, for having discharged our guns several times as we rode, we began to lay around us with our sabres. Lord! Bridgey, but it was fine to see the way we struggled for possession of that hill, it was worth ten years at any period of my life. I noticed that I had strayed away, or got separated from the rest of the Frenchmen during the fight, and just as I made this discovery my horse dropped under me. I tried to get upon my feet, and was dimly aware of what I was doing, the roaring in my ears was something terrible. I felt myself struggling with some of the enemy, and saw that I had gone quite a distance past the top of the hill, where I now saw the tri-colors of France.

"Almost at the same moment I received a blow on the top of the head that nearly knocked me senseless, and as I dropped to the ground I felt someone grasp me by the shoulders and lift me to the back of a horse in front of him, holding me there with one hand and with the other cutting his way back through those who opposed him. Gradually I regained my wits and saw that about fifty of our troopers had come to our rescue, they had charged a whole regiment of Prussians led by the Lieutenant, who had ridden from his command to assist me. Then I was carried to the rear. I tell you it was an awful sight, Bridgey, as I passed many a poor fellow who had lost arms or legs and heard them screaming with pain. I pitied them, too, but I could not help thinking that the men who were hurt the most said the least about it, in fact, I passed several poor fellows who had lost their head entirely and were making no fuss at all."

A smile wrinkled the corners of Bridgey's mouth, but I was unable to control myself so laughed aloud. The Doctor had become so earnest in his description of the fight that he did not notice the error in his speech, or deem it impossible for a man to shout or scream when his head had been shot, blown, or cut off.

"Tell me what you are laughing at," he exclaimed, "for I can see nothing funny to laugh at." So we told him what he had said, and he joined us in the laugh at his own blunder.

"But it was a good thing that I forgot myself that day, for when he came to my rescue he discovered a weakness in the enemy on that part of the field, and with about five hundred men charged the place, took another battery, and turned the battle in our favor. So the battle of Neptunes Hill was won through a mistake of mine, and the bravery of the Lieutenant. I met the young officer after that, he came every day to see me. We grew very fond of each other, and many times since that day I have more than half believed he was insane, as I listened to him laughing, laughing when angered at something, and always leading into an action with a peal of laughter on his lips. That's how I met Roul, Bridgey. In less than a month he had fought a brother officer in defense of a stranger, risked his life to save a man he had never spoken a word to, and won a big fight, for which he received his troop. I have seen him in many trying situations since that day, but none that was as desperate as the battle of Neptunes Hill."

"But he has repaid the risk I took that day a hundred times since then," I exclaimed, "Bridgey, I give you my word of honor that he has always followed where I led, sometimes led, and let me follow, and in every instance where this was so, I have received the praise and honors that should have been his. I tell you he has been a loyal, honest friend since the day we met."

How long this would have continued it is hard to guess,

but we were recalled to other things by the stopping of the coach, and prepared to spend the night at a somewhat dilapidated building, dignified by the title of The Hotel Braumeire, although the only thing about it that bore any external evidence of a hostelry was the name, and several fellows, in fact, quite a number of farmers who were gathered there, perhaps they were employed in the neighborhood, and were welcomed by mine host who had some villainous wine to sell. And they were quarrelsome, too, it took no wise man to discover that, for some of the remarks made in our hearing were evidently made to provoke us. In this they were successful, for crossing the road to the wood pile, I carefully selected two small clubs about the length of my forearm, then returned to the coach where I secured our swords. I had just buckled mine around me when the Doctor reappeared in search of me; he was followed by some of the loafers, who seemed so intent on picking a quarrel with us. I motioned toward the clubs I had secured, at the same time giving him his sword.

"Man, it is a head you have for business. I was afraid they had attacked you, Roul, they seem so unreasonable."

"No, Doctor, they contented themselves with calling me a few choice names, but they followed you into the place."

"When we got inside, Bridgey took the baby in her arms and went to our rooms, but the look she gave me said plainer than words, 'go out there and teach that bunch some manners, so here I am Roul, prepared to take advantage of the preparations you have made for the ruction, but hide the clubs, Roul, they are coming over to investigate what we are talking about, and mind you now, no love taps, be sure to hit hard enough to knock them down.'"

The Doctor's surmise proved correct, for several of the men had started toward us in a threatening manner, making no haste, but by their actions leaving no doubt of their intentions to pick a quarrel. I could only guess at the cause of their ill will towards us, which was nothing more than

the feeling of hatred among the peasant class for anyone they suspected of being above their station in life, a feeling which sometimes led them to commit crimes and misdemeanors they would never think of unless backed by numbers, or altogether intoxicated. But this feeling was general among the peasantry of France at that time. Many of them had followed the fortunes of Napoleon, and still loving him, were ready at all times to assail the nobility, whom they blamed for the late reverses and the downfall of the Emperor.

As this thought flashed across my mind I laid a detaining hand on the arm of the Doctor, and turned to address the men who were now quite near us. I had miscalculated, however, for they were much nearer than I thought, and only the sudden action of Murphy prevented me from receiving a blow on the side of the head.

"Don't be in such a hurry man," he exclaimed as he felled the man with a blow from his club, then as he repeated the operation on two others he advised them to "lie easy, and be still," advice which they seemed inclined to follow, as they made no move to get up.

"Man, Rou! It is wonderful what strength of argument a bit of a shellalah has, see the rest of them, how respectfully they keep their distances. My grandmother often said in my hearing, and I can vouch for the truth of the statement, that even a King's scepter is a trifling thing compared to a bit of blackthorn."

"I don't think any of them will molest us now," I answered as I noticed the others move away, "they seem to have enough of it for this time."

"That really is too bad, Rou! for I was just getting started, and you never had a chance to show them what you could do. But here a minute, does this fellow look familiar to you?"

My attention being called to the man, I recognized him as a former trooper in the 10th. I waited until he was well

on his feet and his companions showed signs of returning animation. I was greatly relieved by this, for I knew that the peasants, believing the Doctor had killed one of them, would return armed, and with the others, try to take revenge on us.

"Andrea, you rascal, what do you mean," I exclaimed. The man turned an eager eye in my direction, then:

"Sacre La Barbe De La Saint Michael," he exclaimed, "Mon Dieu, my Captain is it you?"

"Who does it look like?" demanded the Doctor, "the angel Garbiel?"

Bringing his feet together, he saluted, then glanced down the lane at the side of the hotel.

"Mon Captain, please excuse, I must tell my friends I am not dead, they are coming."

We could hear quite a noise in the direction he went, and realized that we were lucky indeed to have a friend among them, but as a matter of precaution, we buckled our belts around us, not being sure how much influence Andrea might have among the mob. We had just finished examining the priming of our pistols when another peasant ventured to arise.

"Stay right there, my brave lad, just wait until your comrade returns, and if your friends act at all reasonable, then you may go, but if they do not, then bless yourself and say your prayers, for at the very first sign of hostility to us there will be two new angels answer their names when the roll is called down there. He pointed at his feet, but his eye was fixed on the clouds.

These threats proved unnecessary for Andrea, returning in a few moments, was accompanied by several others who seemed to be friendly, so we greeted them with smiles, for we fully appreciated the danger we had just passed through.

"They know who you are now, Captain, and would not harm you for the whole world if it were seven times as big as it is."

"What do you think of that now?" demanded the Doctor, with a look of genuine admiration in his eyes. "And he never kissed the Blarney Stone either, and I vouch for that. I suppose you will tell him that they want him to lay over for a day or two, just to show his good will toward them."

"They would gladly and contentedly keep him forever, Doctor, if you will consent to remain with him."

"Roul! Do you hear that? The rascal is making fun of me right to my own face too."

"No, Doctor, but perhaps you remember Renaud of ours?"

"Faith and I do remember him, the thief that he is."

"He lives here, and has told so many stories of your skill as a surgeon——"

"That settles it my man, I would not leave the place now until I have seen him, not for a hundred acres of land in the Garden of Eden."

"But he is a cripple now, Doctor, and has often said that if he could only get to a place near you that you would cure him. He has great confidence in you, and he is a great sufferer. I am sure you would pity him if you were to see him."

We were now surrounded by a number of the peasants who earnestly asked us to meet with them in the town hall and address them, as many of them desired information about America where they intended to immigrate as soon as they were able to do so.

This appeal won my consent, for I knew that many of them would be far better off in that new land. So after supper we were escorted to the hall, where I told them of the great opportunities in the United States of America. The Doctor, speaking last, created considerable amusement as he described some of the incidents of our stay across the pond, and advised them to save the passage money as they would need it when they arrived there, and besides that, it was so disagreeable to ride in a boat that he preferred to walk the entire distance, anyway. We made quite a number of friends

among them, and I enjoyed the evening immensely, but the Doctor hurried away in the company of Andrea to visit the crippled Renaud.

I don't remember having so much fun at any dance in my life, although I was unable to dance I enjoyed seeing the others enjoy themselves, and they delighted to show me how high was their regard for me, for I was a friend of Napoleon and the peasants loved Napoleon. I felt sure the Doctor was in bed, so I did not wait for him. I was very happy that night as I laid my head on the pillow, for the thought had crossed my mind was that tomorrow I would see my mother and the dear ones at home.

Seven o'clock comes very early sometimes, and this time it came a great deal earlier than I expected. I heard some one beating on the panels of my door before I had been asleep a minute. Faintly at first but gradually increasing in force, until I was thoroughly aroused. I shouted an answer to my caller.

"Get up, Roul, and find out what happened to the Doctor, he has been out all night."

It was the voice of Bridgey, and I could detect a note of genuine distress in her accents.

"I will be down in a minute," I answered, and though I could hardly dress in so short a time, it was not long before I descended the stairs, to find the Doctor busy explaining the cause of his absence to his wife.

"You see, dear, he was an old acquaintance of mine and needed help, so I just could not let him suffer any longer. His spine had been injured and I felt sure I could help him, after I made the examination."

"Forgive me for scolding you, dear," she exclaimed as she kissed his forehead, a feat she could only accomplish by standing on her toes and pulling him down to her.

"You were already forgiven, even before you spoke," he answered, as he returned the salute.

"I will have to return several times before he is able to

move again, in fact, it has been a long time since he walked at all, but I hope to help him so that he will be able to walk again."

"I am sure you will," she answered with that great confidence women have in their husbands, no matter what they undertake, "I am sure you will," and her eyes sparkled with pleasure at the thought of his skill and ability, which was of no mean order, as I remarked before.

"Doctor, I think we will not start until this afternoon."

I said this as much to interfere with their scene as anything else.

"Why?" he demanded.

"You have been out all night——"

"Nothing at all, Roul, after the operation I laid down and had a good nap, sure I am as fresh as a June rose."

So it came about that we started for home at the very minute we had decided to start, which perhaps would not have been the case if the Doctor had been at home all night, but as he divined my meaning he laughingly said, "I am no decrepit old codger yet, Roul, and am as anxious to see your parents as if they were my own."

"Now, Doctor," I said after we were fairly started, "it would help to pass the time if you were to tell us about your acquaintance with young Renaud." He reflected a few minutes and then began his story.

"It was like this, Roul, we were quartered near Brussels, you were off on special duty. With one thing and another we tried to pass the time, which was so lifeless that it became irksome to the most of us. I solemnly declare that no human enemy ever caused us as much annoyance as the fleas did there, why man, they left one in regular blisters, and made no bones about it either. I should say blisters and bones were about all they left, speaking for myself I was quite sure they had assimilated every drop of blood I ever had, and took the flesh along with it too. There was one relief for me though, that was to take a bath of salt

and soda every day; this required some little preparation, the carrying of water was done by one of the troopers for a few franks, which he spent as soon as he earned them, then I would go with the other ingredients for my bath, and enjoy myself to my heart's content. One day, I never will forget that day, if I live a thousand years. I went to the shed and found the tub already prepared and waiting as usual. Man! how inviting it did look, so dropping the salt and soda into the water I began to undress while they dissolved, all the while enjoying in my imagination the relief it would give me. I plunged myself into the water and began to rub my body with a rough towel, then I discovered there was something unusual in the water. It seemed to cling to me. With growing surprise I began to investigate; everything I touched stuck to me, and at last I realized that I was the victim of a practical joke. I tell you, Roul, I was in a quandry, when the man who owned the place came in to get two cans of prepared glue he had left there. It was the stuff he was trying to put on the market, hoping to make his fortune out of it. He was almost beside himself at the loss of the preparation and was about to call the Gen. D'Armes when I paid him enough to cover his loss. Yes, I paid him well, and he carried in a tub of fresh water and assisted me to wash the sticky stuff off my body, but was only partly successful at that.

"You may be sure I had an interview with the man who carried that water at once; he denied doing anything of the kind, swore by all the Saints on the calendar that the tub was filled with clean water when he left it for me. I believed him too, he was so earnest about it. There I was, going around in that hot sun, sweating freely and every drop of the moisture melting more of the glue my skin had absorbed and causing my clothes to stick to my skin without the least bit of provocation. Something wonderful in the way of glue will stick if properly applied, Roul, and it was several days before I was entirely rid of the stuff."

I could control myself no longer, so burst out laughing, Bridgey and the nurse keeping a pretty fair accompaniment to my mirth, the Doctor joining in, laughing at the remembrance which had caused him so much annoyance at the time.

"But how did you ever find out who played the trick?" I asked.

"Well it was too good to keep, and as the story leaked out there was considerable amusement over it, but as I took it with the best grace possible, it was soon a thing of the past, though it still lived in my memory."

"Well, one day I had been successful in saving a leg for a poor devil who had been severely wounded, and in a burst of gratitude he told me that it was Lieutenant Renaud who played the joke. Well, I looked earnestly for Lieutenant Renaud and at last learned that he had been invalided home. Last night was the first time I set eyes on him since. Had I discovered him at that time—Well, I will do my best for him, and I believe I will be able to make a man out of him again."

Bridgey leaned over and patted his face affectionately, a silent sign of her approval, while I gripped his hand in my own.

"But, Roul, don't ever try the effect of a bath in prepared glue, it is not what you might think it is."

The story, told in his inimitable way, had consumed considerable time and we were now approaching my home, in fact, we were at the place where I had fought the man who for a brief space of time had assumed the functions of the Emperor, and were only two miles from the Chateau St. Armand.

What fleeting thoughts chased each other through my mind as I sprang from the moving coach, and running alongside of Marcus untied him. The driver seeing what I was about to do, stopped his team as I tightened the girth on my horse.

"I knew it, Roul, you could not wait, so be off with you."

"And don't be a booby," chimed in Bridgey, as she smiled at me.

I felt the blood rushing to my head as I mounted and rode away. I remembered well the first time I heard that word booby. There may have been races ran on that same road, there may also have been some fast trips on it, but I venture to say that never before had the distance been covered in as short a time as I made that day. Tears sprang to my eyes as I looked at the Chateau and I had great trouble in restraining my emotion. As I drew near, I could see my father about to enter his carriage, but his attention having been called to a horseman so rapidly approaching, he awaited my arrival. Although he expected me soon, he did not recognize me until I was dismounting. He seemed unable to move toward me, but I sprang to his side just in time to prevent him from falling. As he placed his arms around my neck and fondly murmured my name, I could scarcely realize that it was the same grand old man I had last seen on the wharf at Havre, but he had not fully recovered from the sickness my mother had told me of in her last letter.

The hostler taking charge of my horse, I led my father to the house, my mother and foster mother coming to meet us. They too were ready to go for the drive, but needless to say, it was deferred for that day.

I pass over the joy of that meeting, it is easier to imagine than to describe. The coach was now stopping at the door; my mother fairly ran down the steps to meet Bridgey and the Doctor, for next to an all-wise providence she was grateful to my friends for my being on earth, sure as she was that no other man possessed such wonderful skill as Doctor Murphy.

I did not have time to ask about Emilie until we had passed the first transports of our joy. Then it was Bridgey who finally asked the question.

"The young woman you wrote about, where is she?"

"She owns considerable property in this neighborhood, most of it acquired by the death of a relative, and so she left us for a few days to attend to some business matters of her own. She is a wonderful woman. I do not know what I would have done without her. I know of no way to repay her for the many kind things she has done 'or me," was the answer my father made.

"Perhaps," I broke in, "perhaps I may be able to assist you, father, you know I——"

Here I caught the fixed stare of that wife of Murphy's, and as she was smiling in her most encouraging manner, it threw me into great confusion. Hesitating for a moment I continued.

"I have had considerable experience, and——"

A burst of laughter from that woman drowned the rest of what I was going to say, in fact, prevented my speaking further at that time. As the rest of our folks seemed to catch the infection from her, they all joined in the laugh at me, although I could hardly enter into their humor with the same abandon they did.

We were just in the midst of this laughter when the door was thrown open and the D'Sayres came rushing in upon us, and before I had recovered from my surprise, the Count and Countess had their arms around me and were embracing me with a warmth I did not find difficult to return, for the Countess was a very pretty woman and the Count was one of my dearest friends.

"We went to Havre to meet you, Roul,—Henri," he corrected. "For we received word of the time of your departure from Philadelphia and as the ship you came in belongs to our firm, I had very little trouble in guessing almost the exact time of your arrival; for a slow ship, she made a quick passage and you had already left Havre when we arrived there. The madam and myself were so determined to overtake you that we have about used up six horses on the road."

"And, General, the reason we were so anxious to meet you is because you are the best friend we ever had, we owe all our happiness to you, dear brother." This from the Countess, who as yet had noticed no one in the room but myself. Suddenly remembering herself, she flitted to Bridgey, and snatching Roul, Jr. from his mother's arms, she mothered the little fellow with kisses, indeed she was very profuse with them after she got started, for she kissed every one in the room, and fairly captivated the two older ladies with the warmth of her greeting to them. D'Sayre had already paid his compliments to the others.

"I see that you still wear the sign of the Sixteen," he said this with a smile.

"I would not part with it for anything in the whole world," I answered.

"Well, you are right too, for that sign is worn only by the best friends of Napoleon, those whom he loves and trusts in everything, and it saved a very dear friend of yours, Henri."

"But she did not know the significance of the pin, only in a general way," I said.

"On the contrary, Henri, she knows the true meaning of the pin, and proudly wears it, believing she is the dearest on earth to you."

The Countess and Bridgey had engaged the attention of the others, enabling the Count and myself to speak for a few moments undisturbed.

"Did you tell her?" I enquired.

"Yes, Henri, so did you, or at least you said enough for her to understand the night you gave it to her, for she is a very bright young woman."

Somehow, this information thrilled me, and I could not restrain the impulse to put my hand on the shoulder of my friend and give him a friendly shake. Then I turned to look at the others who were enjoying themselves, the women together, my father and the Doctor having entered into an animated conversation.

"You spoke of the badge of the sixteen, who are members of the League?" I enquired.

"I hold, or did hold, four of them until I gave you the other two, and believe me, Henri, not alone because of my gratitude and love, but by command of Napoleon, who was the originator of the League; he trusted you fully. Marshall Ney is another who holds membership in our League. According to our most solemn oath, when the pin or badge is sent from one to the other, we must rally to the support of the one who calls us by this sign. You, of course, not knowing of the oath, and never having taken it, would not be bound to respond to any call, but—"

"I accepted the pin subject to the same conditions as the rest of you, and will follow heart and hand where it will lead me."

"Even to the support of the Emperor again?" he asked, and I could detect a note of eagerness in his voice.

"Gladly! I—"

The words were smothered by his exclamation of delight.

"I knew it, Roul, I knew it." Here he looked anxiously around, then lowering his voice:

"We may expect to be called on at any time to support the Emperor again. In fact, his escape is already planned and we only await a favorable opportunity to carry our plans to a successful issue, so be ready, Roul, be ready."

"I loved the Emperor because he was Napoleon, I followed him because he was a leader of men, I enjoyed the opportunities he gave me to quench my desire for excitement and will gladly follow him again, whenever and wherever he may need me."

"Brave heart, no wonder Napoleon trusted you. Now, Roul, you are still the Messenger of Napoleon, and may be sent on special duty at any time; you are the Commander of the League, and the real representative of the Emperor, and as such have many duties to perform at this time, but of that more anon. Now prepare yourself for this one even—"

ing free from the cares of state, for tomorrow your real life work begins."

Going to my father and the Doctor, he joined them in conversation. I glanced around the room and saw that every one was busy and greatly interested in each other, so I started for my room intending to clean myself up a little, as I was very dusty and needed the refreshing influences of soap and water. I was thinking of the message D'Sayre had just given me.

"Brave heart," I thought, "they may put you in exile, and deny you the liberty of the land you have made great, but they cannot restrain the fire of your ambition, any more than they can control the planets. Oh! Napoleon, yours was a glorious career, you have almost dictated terms to the entire world, you reached a greatness no other could attain, you whose early claim to recognition was your own good sword. Can they still restrain you, or will your star shine bigger and brighter than ever before, made more glorious by the temporary obscurity it has rested under?"

Thinking thus, I was passing my mother's room. The door was standing open I glanced inside. Then stopped, a strange, wild thrill of delight passing over me as I saw a woman in the act of arranging her hair before a glass. Could this beautiful woman be Emilie? If so, she had greatly changed. I could hear voices behind me and turned to see my father and the Doctor approaching. Then turned toward the woman in the room. She was looking at me now, one hand resting on the dresser as if to support herself, the other hand held over her heart. I saw she was making a mighty effort to regain her self control, for my sudden appearance had startled her. Then holding out her hand to me she smiled as I approached her.

"You surprised me, Henri, I came in at the private door and was not aware of your arrival."

I barely touched her hand as I drew her towards me, and my answer to her greeting was to throw my arms

around her waist and draw her to me, and salute her with a volley of kisses on her lips, cheek, neck, hair, any place, every place I could reach in that sweet, mad delerium. Mine! she was mine. I had loved her long in silence, but now, now she must suffer for it. But the suffering did not seem to be disagreeable for she placed her arms around my neck and held up her lips for the kisses I poured upon them. The excitement of battle, the glories of victory, the cheers of my comrades, I had felt them all, but never before had I felt that sweet, mad, intoxicating thrill, and for the time being I was insensible to everything but the madness of my passion. The look in her bright eyes seemed to invite me and excite me to greater efforts, and, madman that I was, I would have continued had not the voice of my father recalled my wandering senses.

"God bless you my children," I heard him say, and turned in time to see the Doctor slyly dragging him from the room.

"Come along Count, leave the boy alone, you see he has had very little experience with women and deserves this chance to prove he is not a booby after all."

THE END.

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